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THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SINGAPORE TEACHERS' UNION
(IN THE POST-WAR COLONIAL PERIOD)

A Thesis

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by

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This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except when due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

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October, 1971.

SUMMARY

Part I of this study covers the period from 1946 to 1954 when all the commanding positions in the education service were held by expatriate officers. It tries to bring into focus the essence of the colonial system as it affected the trade unionism of teachers in the English schools. Chapter 1 provides the background for the study. Chapters 2 to 6 deal with the working conditions of teachers, the formation of the Singapore Teachers' Union (S.T.U.), its pan-Malayan activities, the salaries commissions, and the struggle for a unified education service.

After the war, teachers were generally disillusioned with the Singapore Teachers' Association and the Malayan Teachers' Federation, which was made up of the teachers' associations in the various States and Settlements in the Malay Peninsula and in Singapore. Their constitution and official patronage made them effete bodies as far as the improvement of the economic and professional interests of teachers was concerned. Many of the locally recruited teachers believed that their interests were apart from and in antagonism to that of the colonial establishment. An independent trade union was considered necessary in order to bring an end to the glaring disparities in salaries, opportunities for promotion, and other conditions of service,

especially those between the expatriate teachers and the locally recruited teachers. The founders of the S.T.U. had been influenced by the radical traditions of the British labour movement. When the S.T.U. was formed on 19 October 1946, it stood firm in its belief that the aided school teachers, who were not regarded as government servants, should be included as members of the Union. In its first year, it played a leading role in the campaign for back pay for the period under Japanese occupation to be paid in full to all government servants.

The motive force of the S.T.U. was its aim of a unified education service for all qualified teachers, government or aided, regardless of their race or sex. They should all be placed on one "basic" scale, the minimum qualification for entry to the scale being the Normal Training Certificate. Holders of this certificate should then start at the initial of the scale, but the differences in the points of entry and the maxima for the non-graduate and the graduate teachers should be minimal. In the unified education service all teachers should have the right to be considered for the most important positions in the education service.

Singapore was made a separate colony after the war, but the leaders of the S.T.U. felt that the aspirations of teachers in Singapore should be set against the background of

Malaya - i.e. the Malay Peninsula and Singapore. They then became involved in the forming of teachers' unions in place of teachers' associations in the Malay Peninsula and were responsible for the establishment of the Malayan Teachers' Union (M.T.U.) on 2 September 1947. The M.T.U. was the central organisation of teachers in the two territories. From the beginning it had not only to be concerned with trade union laws, but also with political questions. In pursuing its aim of a unified education service, it challenged the privileged positions of the expatriate officers. It was most vigorous in promoting the rights of teachers although it had to work within the strict framework of colonial laws, General Orders, and Colonial Regulations. On 8 July 1949, it was declared an illegal organisation. The Conference of Delegates of Teachers' Unions was its successor, and although it was an unregistered body, it represented, while it existed, the hope of the teachers of the two territories for a pan-Malayan body until it was finally dissolved in December 1951. After that year the S.T.U. concentrated on its own problems in Singapore.

The most important of the activities of the M.T.U. concerned the question of salaries. The salaries commissions, appointed at different times during the period, provided a forum for the teachers to present their case, but at the same

time they also reflected the value and prestige which the colonial government was prepared to allow the teaching service. The Trusted Commission (1947) disqualified the graduates of Raffles College and the Normal trained teachers from being considered for the posts of Education Officers. These prize appointments were to be filled by the expatriate teachers. However, the Interim Report (1948) and the Final Report (1949) of the Cowgill Committee did not bar the locally recruited teachers from being considered for the prize appointments. Teaching was for the first time considered as a service that had special characteristics. The Cowgill Committee recommended improved salary for the locally recruited teachers in the English schools, but it did not accept the principles of a unified education service. In 1950 the Benham Committee treated teachers as belonging to just another branch of the public service, and recommended depressed salary scales for the non-graduate teachers based on certain key scales applied for the whole of the public service.

The intensified campaign of the Singapore Teachers' Union for a unified education service finally resulted in the establishment of the 1953 Singapore Education Service Scheme. However, the minimum qualification for admission to the scheme was the Certificate of Education; the course for

the Certificate of Education was started in 1950. The Normal trained teachers, the basic core of teachers in the English schools, were excluded from the unified scheme.

Part II of this study covers the period from 1955 to 1959 when the locally elected government shared power with the colonial officials under the terms of the Rendel Constitution. Chapters 9 to 12 deal with the Normal training issue, the effects of the 1953 Singapore Education Service Scheme, the aspirations of the Graduate Teachers' Association (G.T.A.), the 1958 Singapore Education Service Scheme, and the reaction of the S.T.U. to the new emphasis in education and educational provision with the advent of full internal self-government.

The S.T.U. pressed, to the exclusion of other issues, for the recognition of the Normal Training Certificate as the basis for entry to the 1953 Singapore Education Service Scheme, and proposed the integration of the salary scale of the Normal trained teachers with that of the Certificated teachers in February 1956. This was during the period when the main preoccupation of the Ministry of Education was with the explosive situation that arose from the problems of resolving the place of the Chinese language and education in Singapore. The militancy which the S.T.U. displayed in order

to raise the value of the Normal Training Certificate in 1957 ceased when government teachers were threatened with the General Orders and the forfeiture of their pensions. It was only in September 1962 that the Ministry of Education offered a solution.

The G.T.A., which was formed by the graduate teachers who broke away from the S.T.U. in 1951, was primarily interested in obtaining the same salaries and status as the expatriate officers and the important positions held by them when the policy of Malayanisation came into being. The graduate teachers were the main beneficiaries of the 1953 Singapore Education Service Scheme and its implementation marked the beginning of a period of intense hostility in the relations between the S.T.U. and the G.T.A. The imposition of the 1958 Singapore Education Service Scheme, however, brought the S.T.U., G.T.A., and other organisations of teachers in Singapore together in opposition to the scheme, but there was nothing they could do to reject it. The 1958 Singapore Education Service Scheme was the cause of great unhappiness for teachers for the next ten years. But in 1959 there was hope that, with full internal self-government, the status of teachers would improve.

CONTENTS

Preface	...	...	...	...	...	...	i
Abbreviations	...	...	...	...	...	...	iii
Part I, 1945-1954							
1. Introduction	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
2. Teachers and their Working Conditions	...	...	...	...	...	...	35
3. The Formation of the Singapore Teachers' Union	...	...	...	...	...	...	59
4. The First Year	...	...	...	...	...	...	83
5. The Malayan Teachers' Union I	...	...	...	...	...	...	112
6. The Malayan Teachers' Union II	...	...	...	...	...	...	146
7. The Malayan Teachers' Union III	...	...	...	...	...	...	166
8. The S.T.U. and the Unified Education Service	...	...	...	...	...	...	196
Part II, 1955-1959							
9. The Normal Training Issue	...	...	...	...	...	...	221
10. Teachers and the Establishment	...	...	...	...	...	...	240
11. The 1958 S.E.S. Scheme (English Schools)	...	...	...	...	...	...	271
12. Conclusion	...	...	...	...	...	...	291
Notes	...	...	...	...	...	...	301
Bibliography	...	...	...	...	...	...	340

PREFACE

As seen by the government, education serves as a powerful means for "carving out" Singapore's national identity; it is recognised as an instrument for inculcating national consciousness among the multi-racial migrant population and for training the young to meet the demands of the developing industries. However, there is no equivalent recognition accorded to the teachers. Their conditions of work and service are unsatisfactory. Teacher-education and the study of education are not given the importance that they deserve. Teachers are expected to follow diligently the exhortations that the political leaders issue from time to time regarding the teacher's function in society.

The educational function thus prescribed is based on what the government thinks a Singaporean should be, and what the teacher should do in order to create the new Singaporean in terms of the interests and survival of the small island Republic. And the policy of the Singapore Teachers' Union has depended to an unusual degree on the political and social assumptions of the government. But the government contends that the teachers as a whole have not responded whole-heartedly to the changes and new emphasis in education as a result of the accelerated social and economic changes taking place since Singapore separated from Malaysia in 1965.

The appraisal by the teachers themselves at the Modernisation Seminar in February 1971 brought about a sharper consciousness of the failure of the Union in its role both as a trade union and as a professional organisation. They made radical changes in the Union's constitution in order to improve the effectiveness of the Union in such areas as its organisation and administration and the provision of more services for its members. They accepted the educational function laid down for them, but declared that the professional wing of the Union - one result of the seminar - had to face up to the task of

obtaining the right conditions in the school where teachers can use their initiative, and in time determine the areas in which they should be left to exercise their professional autonomy. However, the seminar did not come to grips with the important question of power. Although the Union has existed for the last twenty-five years, it still does not have even the basic right to collective bargaining. It is not consulted on changes in educational policy. The teachers have to know where their power lies and how they can mobilise it to achieve the aims of the Union. This question becomes doubly important in a situation where the ruling party is truculent and brooks no opposition.

In the face of the tasks that the Union sets itself, a knowledge of the origin and development of the Union may reveal some of the underlying causes of the present difficulties, and suggest ways in which further progress might be made. As Part I of this thesis shows, the teacher-unionists were undaunted by the complexity of issues facing them in the post-war colonial period. They evolved principles, and developed methods and means of struggle for bringing about a fairer deal and greater respect for teachers. At the same time their concern for professional matters did not seem to be in doubt.

This thesis was made possible from the materials placed at the disposal of the writer through the assistance of K. Thiagarajan, General Secretary, Singapore Teachers' Union, in 1970. Among the many present and past teacher-unionists to whom the writer is indebted, particular mention should be made of Abdul Karim Badoo, K.V. Thaver, K.S. Williams, Lawrence Sia, Paul Abisheganaden, Seow Cheng Fong, and V. Ambiavagar. The writer also wishes to thank Mr. Gwee Yee Hean, Acting Director, School of Education, University of Singapore, and Mr. M. Simons, Lecturer, Department of Education, Faculty of Arts, University of Adelaide, for their valuable advice.

ABBREVIATIONS

A.T.U.A.	...	...	Assistant Trade Union Adviser
C.E.S.	...	...	Colonial Education Service
D. of E.	...	...	Director of Education
G.O.	...	...	General Orders
G.S.B.P.C.	...	...	Government Servants' Back Pay Council
G.T.A.	...	...	Graduate Teachers' Association
J.C.S.A.	...	...	Junior Civil Service Association
J.T.U.	...	...	Johore Teachers' Union
K.T.U.	...	...	Kelantan Teachers' Union
M.A.S.C.	...	...	Malayan Aided Schools' Council
M.T.F.	...	...	Malayan Teachers' Federation
M.T.U.	...	...	Malayan Teachers' Union
N.S.T.U.	...	...	Negri Sembilan Teachers' Union
N.U.T.	...	...	National Union of Teachers
P.M.T.U.	...	...	Pan-Malayan Teachers' Union
P.S.C.	...	...	Public Services Commission
P.T.U.	...	...	Penang Teachers' Union
P.U.T.	...	...	Perak Union of Teachers
R.T.U.	...	...	Registrar of Trade Unions
S.E.S.	...	...	Singapore Education Service
S.T.A.	...	...	Singapore Teachers' Association
S.T.U.	...	...	Singapore Teachers' Union
T.U.A.M.	...	...	Trade Union Adviser, Malaya
T.U.P.	...	...	Teachers' Union of Pahang
U.C.E.S.	...	...	Unified Colonial Education Service
U.K.	...	...	United Kingdom
U.S.T.	...	...	Union of Selangor Teachers

Part I, 1946 to 1954.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1941 the educational pattern of Malaya¹ consisted of 4 systems of education, based not on any geographical or regional considerations but simply on the 4 main languages used. There were a system of Malay schools, a system of government and government aided English schools, a system of Chinese schools and a system of Tamil schools. The pre-war policy² was one that encouraged the "unequal" development of the 4 separate systems. Communal organisations, private bodies and the various Christian missions were generally allowed to establish their own schools as long as they posed no threat to the security of the country.³ The colonial government did not consider that it was its responsibility alone to provide education for its subject people. Its original aims were trade and high profits, not educational provision. There was a serious lack of understanding and thinking about the educational problems of a multi-racial society. The bulk of the revenue which the government collected was expended on defence and public works and only a small proportion of it was used on education and public health.⁴ Until 1867, English education was left mainly in the hands of the various Christian missions and from 1867 to 1941, it established a few English primary and secondary schools and also gave aid to the mission schools - the aided English schools - and to a few vernacular

schools, notably Malay and some Tamil schools.⁵ The Chinese schools were on the whole managed and financed by the successful Chinese merchants and the Chinese clan associations.

Administration

The Director of Education, the head of the Education Department⁶ first set up in Singapore, assumed overall responsibility for all educational matters in the Straits Settlements and he was also the Adviser of the Malay States on education. In his job, he was assisted by a Chief Inspector of Schools since 1919, an Assistant Director of Education for Malay Schools since 1916, an Assistant Director of Education for Chinese Schools since 1924, an Inspector of Tamil Schools since 1930 and 7 European Inspectors of Schools who functioned as administrative heads in each of the 4 Federated Malay States (Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang) and the 3 Straits Settlements (Singapore, Penang and Malacca). Each of the 7 European Inspectors of Schools was responsible for English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil education within his State or Settlement; and each of the Inspectors of the 4 Malay States had a European Assistant Inspector of Schools to help him. The Director-Adviser and the administrative heads in each State and Settlement were responsible for both administrative and professional matters. Educational administration involved such matters as budget, terms and conditions of service of all the staffs, buildings and school equipment. Professional matters would include teacher-training, inspection of schools, examinations, syllabuses and textbooks.

The administrative heads of the Education Department in the States and Settlements - the European Inspectors of Schools - would see to the training of teachers for the Malay and English schools. Malay school teachers were trained in the 2 training colleges, one for men and the

other for women, after they had completed 6 years of schooling. The English teachers underwent the Normal training in classes organised for them by the Department after they had completed their secondary education. The Chinese schools did not train their own teachers and had to recruit their trained teachers from China. And the Tamil school teachers were recruited from India.

There was no opportunity offered to the locally recruited English school teachers to occupy any of the important administrative posts. There was a closed door policy as far as the administrative posts were concerned. They were only open to members of the expatriate Educational and Administrative Service, known as the Malayan Education Service, recruited by the Colonial Office by open competition in London.⁷

In 1941, the total enrolment⁸ of the registered schools in Singapore was as follows:

English Schools	27,000
Trade Schools	300
Malay Schools	5,800
Chinese Schools	38,000
Tamil Schools	1,000
	<hr/>
	72,100

The enrolment in the government and aided English schools was 17,500 while that in the private English schools was 9,500. There were only 81 registered English schools (31 government and government aided schools and 50 private English schools) compared to 370 registered Chinese schools. In the same year there were 18 registered Tamil schools and 29 Malay schools. Adult evening classes in technical and commercial subjects catered for 300 to 400 students. There were then 2 Normal training classes, with 60 students, and Raffles College continued to function until the end of 1941.

Government English schools in the big urban centres in Malaya were either wholly primary schools or wholly secondary schools; the aided schools however preferred to keep both the primary and secondary departments in one building. Aided schools were as important as government schools in providing English education even as late as 1948;⁹ they were responsible for two-thirds of the English education in both the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore and they contributed greatly to the education of girls for in the same year 80% of the girls receiving English education attended schools run by the aided schools. There were some private English schools but they were not assisted with government funds. It was only after the war that the government accepted a larger share of the responsibility for providing education in English and began to build more and more schools to cope with the increasing demand for English education; at the same time the demand for Chinese education did not abate.¹⁰

Background

From 1858 onwards, there was official encouragement of vernacular education in Malay, a language which the India Office considered to be the language of the Straits Settlements.¹¹ English schools were left to the support of the missions. But the plan to establish Malay schools only remained in the planning stage. In 1867, the Straits Settlements became a colony with a Governor in Council responsible directly to the Colonial Office in London.¹² Singapore which began as a trading port in 1819 for the East India Company came directly under the Crown from 1867.

Before 1867, colonial policy on education was basically vocational in nature. Its small investment in education was made necessary because of the need for clerks in the colonial administration. The mission

schools, which introduced the western type of education in Singapore, were protected and aided by the colonial administration and they produced the clerical and lower administrative personnel required by the government departments and by the mercantile houses which prospered and developed with the growth of the entrepot port of Singapore.¹³ The mission schools offered religious education. However the Singapore Free Schools, run by the Anglican mission, emphasised the learning of English and of secular subjects. The scope and attainment of the schools in general were limited.¹⁴ In summing up the survey on education in Singapore from 1819 to 1867, K.M. Waldhauser made the following point:

The compartmentalisation of education - education in Christian mission schools and education in the Free School, education through the medium of Chinese, Tamil, English and Malay, education for boys and education for girls - was quite distinct, and each educational institution was a separate entity. The Government supported English and Malay schools and the others sprouted on their own, if they were able to do so. The Government showed a neutral attitude towards the independent private schools because they did not interfere with or endanger the security of the Straits Settlements.

The great emphasis on an English education, the education of the ruling class, led in some cases to a fostering of separation among the various vernacular groups and to the divorce of an 'educated' elite from the rest of society, thus widening the gap between the two worlds in Singapore. (15)

The East India Company left the development of education to those who were interested. Diversity and the lack of an over-all policy was the main feature; the various vernacular systems tended to pursue disparate ends; so did the aided mission schools. Each school became a distinct entity, developed its own method and criteria for dividing the children into the different classes or grades, determined the length of each school term and planned its own curriculum. The early Chinese schools transmitted Chinese culture, the Indian schools infused a basically

Indian ethos and the Malay vernacular schools instilled a strong Muslim and Malay consciousness. The English schools run by the missions had a Christian emphasis and generally used textbooks and syllabuses similar to those used in England at the time.

Expansion

There was a period of educational expansion from 1867 to 1942. The Governor of the Straits Settlements appointed the Isemonger Committee¹⁶ in 1869 to look into the question of expenditure on education. In the view of that Committee, the grants allocated to the mission schools were inadequate and the lack of a co-ordinated structure of education had led to much confusion and waste. The Woolley Committee¹⁷ in 1870 was given the task of examining the whole subject of education in the Straits Settlements; in its report, released at the end of the same year, it stated that Malay education had made very little progress and recommended that a thorough reorganisation of the existing educational establishments should be made. The mission schools should be continued and it recommended the appointment of a Director of Education with the task of organisation, administration and supervision of all schools in the Colony. The pupil-teacher system was considered satisfactory and the Government decided to go about the reorganisation of the structure of education by taking the schools as they were and then helping them to improve in gradual stages.

An Inspector of Schools, not a Director of Education, was for the first time appointed for the Straits Settlements in 1872; he was A.M. Skinner¹⁸ who took charge of the Department of Education created in Singapore in the same year. There was not a single government school in existence in that year. The mission authorities and private bodies ran the English and vernacular schools. Skinner organised the English

schools in 6 Standards, the highest Standard was the 6th. He drew up the syllabus for each standard and all school subjects were either classified as "ordinary school subjects" or "extra subjects". The 3 Rs constituted the ordinary school subjects. Subjects like History, Geography, Algebra, Music, Drawing and languages like Malay, Chinese, French and German were regarded as extra subjects. The grant given to a school when the pupils passed in an extra subject was higher than the grant given for the pupils passing an ordinary school subject. The idea was to encourage more schools to prepare their pupils for the extra subjects; the approved subjects that were classified as extra subjects increased to 23 in 1891. A campaign for the spread of English schools started with the introduction of the Queen's scholarship in 1885 and the Cambridge Local Examinations in 1891. And it was in the same year that a 7th Standard was added in the English schools. After the 1st World War, Standards 8 and 9 were added. The schools were then divided into 3 Departments, viz., the Primary Department (Primary I, II, Standard I), the Elementary Department (Standards II-V) and the Secondary Department (Standards VI-IX).

Administration of education during the period of Skinner's inspectorship was characterised by the close co-operation between government and the mission authorities. The mission schools were in a strong position when the system of grants-in-aid was introduced. A reform of the aid system was needed to boost the interest and raise the quality of education in the English schools. Fixed grants were given to English schools based on the results obtained at inspection and for average attendance; the fixed grant to a school was calculated as the difference between the grant paid to a school before 1874 and that

earned by the school for the results obtained at inspection and for average attendance. Poor results led to the withdrawal of the fixed grant. The system of payment by result which was started in England on the 1st August, 1863 was criticised by many educators of the day; it "does not suit the interests of schools and their instruction because too much reliance is placed on mechanical processes and too little on intelligence".¹⁹ Two-thirds of the grant depended on good results obtained at examinations. The Education Code of 1899²⁰ divided schools into 3 grades according to their general efficiency and the size of the grant depended on the grade the school in question was placed. In 1908,²¹ the Education Code abolished the formal annual inspections and replaced them by surprise visits in order to determine the proper grade of the school being investigated. Examinations were from time to time set by the Inspectors to pupils in Standards IV and VII. The system of grants by classification introduced since 1899 became unsatisfactory after the 1st World War because of the rising cost of living and the greater demand for education. The Education Conference in 1918²² recommended more grants to the aided English schools in order to raise the standard to that of the government schools.

The Lemon Committee²³ appointed in 1919 looked into the grant-in-aid system. It condemned the old system "as limiting the amount of a grant and so of a school's expenditure by the number of pupils earning a grant; as restricting a low grade school to a low grant and so depriving it of the financial means for improvement in staff and equipment; as giving Government only indirect control over the expenditure over its grants, and as a system, which to be equitable would require continual, possibly annual revision".²⁴ The Committee recommended that the aided schools

should submit their estimates for the following year and it was the Government's obligation to meet the difference between their expected revenue and approved expenditure, the difference to be paid in monthly instalments. It also recommended that Government should look into the question of a Provident Fund for aided school teachers and this recommendation was aimed at putting "the aided school teacher exactly on the footing of his Government colleague".²⁵ Government then undertook to pay the aided school teachers at the same rates as that for the Government teachers and also to pay for the passage and half-pay of European teachers on the staff of the mission schools when they proceeded on leave; rates and taxes on school premises, cost of minor repairs, furniture and equipment were looked after by the Government. Other than the question of pensions for the aided school teachers, the other item which diverged from the normal conditions at that time was the payment of missionary teachers who received less than the other teachers. The increase of the cost in education was great. The 1921 Committee vindicated the changed status of the mission schools. It suggested certain minor changes to make for "smooth administrative working". The 1921 Committee was set up "to criticise but it found it had to bless the system".²⁶ The aided schools, as recommended by the 1919 Committee, were not to be treated as a cheaper method of providing English education than the government schools but they should "be recognised as part of the scholastic system of Malaya to be preserved for the healthy rivalry and competition they afford".²⁷

Chinese schools that were interested in qualifying for government aid had to accept certain conditions,²⁸ one of which was to gear their curriculum to the requirements, with particular reference to arithmetic

and geography, of the English school; the main purpose was that the cream of the aided Chinese schools would be given free places in a government English school, after their third year in the vernacular schools, so that an intensive special course in English could be given to the pupils in question. Government aid to the Chinese schools was introduced in 1923 but the colonial prejudice against Chinese education and its unwillingness to concede to Chinese schools the parity of esteem with English schools was again reflected in the Ten-Year Plan and was the cause of the great pressure put on the government by the Chinese community in 1953, followed by student unrest in the Chinese middle schools, political agitation and rioting right up to 1955 and later. Lee Ah Chai, who analysed the conditions for granting aid to the Chinese schools introduced in 1923, said:

One fact reveals itself from these principles, and that is that Chinese education was treated as subservient to English education. The government continued the attitude that races in Malaya were more useful if they knew both their own language and the English language and not just the latter alone. Chinese education was therefore to be encouraged. But this education which was to be encouraged was to be in the medium of the dialects and not in Mandarin which had too much political significance. Then the teaching of English in Chinese schools was not treated as grant earning. Otherwise students from the Chinese schools would not go to English schools after having a first education in Chinese schools. To encourage this to happen the government would maintain free places in English schools, but these free places were to be filled by bright students. The government wanted to get the best students for itself. The curriculum in Chinese schools should be a preparation for an English education. (29)

The Chinese schools did not generally show any desire to qualify for aid. They were independent of control by the government although legislation was brought to bear upon them in order to curb any of their activities that the government did not consider to be strictly educational.

School Laws

The Registration of School Ordinance³⁰ was a result of the recommendations of the Lemon Committee and the Ordinance, passed in 1920, gave the Government the power to supervise all the existing schools and to control the establishment of new schools.

Many Committee members and teachers of the Chinese schools resigned and many of the Chinese schools closed down rather than be subject to British control.³¹ The Ordinance marked the end of the neutral attitude taken by the government with regard to Chinese education. All teachers and managers of Chinese schools had to be registered and government could close down schools which disseminated revolutionary ideas in conflict with the colonial government. The Chinese schools generally maintained a policy of loyalty to the incumbent government in China. The object of the Ordinance was to strip Chinese education of its political content, not to close down the Chinese schools. Amendments were later made to the Ordinance. China-produced textbooks were not allowed to be used and the Director of Education could refuse to register a teacher; the Governor in Council could prohibit the use of school premises for any purpose which appeared undesirable and to declare a school as unlawful because it was used for the purpose of instruction detrimental to the interests of the pupils or because it was used as the meeting place of an unlawful society. However in spite of the stern measures taken against the Chinese schools, their number increased in the early 1930s. The Governor in Council announced in 1933³² that the government would promote only Malay education and that future applications for grants-in-aid from Chinese schools would not be entertained although those

that were already receiving aid would continue to go on receiving it. More amendments were made to the 1920 Ordinance in 1937³³ because the government was perturbed by the "mushrooming" of the Chinese schools. But the school laws did not prevent the Chinese schools from being used as political instruments for the promotion of Chinese nationalism. The Government committed sins of omission where the Chinese schools were concerned. It failed to train teachers for the Chinese schools although it arrogated to itself the role of registering and supervising teachers who were trained in China. It prohibited the use of China-produced textbook but did not prescribe the use of the textbooks approved for the Chinese schools and allowed the Chinese schools themselves to make the necessary adjustments.

Training of English Teachers

Before 1864 the monitorial system, devised by Lancaster and Bell, was applied in the Singapore 'Free Schools'. The monitors acted as assistants to the experienced teachers and they in turn instructed them on what and how to teach a particular class. The European Headmaster and his Assistant Masters were not exemplars of the art of teaching as they were men who had no special training and were ill-suited for their work. The Roman Catholic schools were however an exception; in these schools there were generally highly educated men and skilled teachers. The first locally recruited teachers were trained by the monitorial system. This method of training teachers gave way to the pupil-teacher system in 1864. They were boys or girls "selected by the manager to assist the teachers of a school in maintaining discipline and instructing the lower classes" while they themselves "continue to be bona fide pupils, regularly receiving at least two hours of daily instruction".³⁴

This method did not prove to be successful. The Education Report of 1898 pointed out:

Where employed, it is employed as a means of combining the use of temporary assistants with the earning of a grant; on the completion of a pupil's term he usually leaves the school so as to be replaced by a grant earning unit. (35)

It was difficult to attract the right people to become teachers because of the unattractive salaries and they would be drawn to better paid jobs after a few years as a teacher. The Education Report of 1900 referred to the "microscopic" salaries paid to the locally recruited teachers in Malacca and described them as semi-literate in English. The poor quality of teachers was realised and the first Normal training class for intending teachers was started in Singapore as an experiment.

It was proposed in 1906, in place of the boys' class for pupil-teachers at Raffles Institution, to substitute normal classes for local teachers already engaged in teaching. These classes were to be held outside of school hours. Although women teachers would be admitted to the normal classes, it was proposed to continue the training class at Raffles Girls' School because a more thorough training could be given to the pupil teachers at the girls' school than was possible with persons employed all day in teaching. Obviously the proposed normal classes were not an ideal scheme for training teachers. Under the circumstances however they were the best arrangement that could be made for the purpose. (36)

Normal training classes were started in Penang in 1907 and in Malacca in 1913. The English masters from government and aided schools taught the classes. In both the Annual Reports of 1909 and 1910 there was recorded a "vast improvement as compared with the local teachers of a few years back".³⁷ Normal training was to continue with some modifications until it was abolished in Singapore in 1960. A better salary scheme was introduced in 1907. The problem remained as always one of attracting the right type of people to the teaching service and retaining them. In 1910, principals of the government and aided schools

were requested to make the Senior Certificate the minimum qualification for entry to the teaching service. And during the 1st World War, "it was a triumph for the scheme of training local teachers that they carried on well in the absence of many European masters and did their best to supply the deficiency caused by the shortage of Europeans".³⁸ Despite the fact that there was great improvement in the professional preparation of teachers, there were still in 1915 as many as 192 out of a total of 525 teachers in Singapore who were not qualified.³⁹ There was a suggestion that young men who wanted to become teachers but were then not engaged in teaching should attend a teachers' training school; it was not however taken up. The system of pupil teacher was re-introduced in order to eliminate the unqualified teachers; the unqualified teachers under the scheme in 1916 were regarded as supernumerary to the staff and while under pupilage would not be allowed to take complete charge of a class. They would qualify as teachers only after they had qualified by passing the Normal training course. This involved heavier expenditure and the aided schools were not keen on the scheme.

There were strong misgivings about the training given to teachers and this time Normal training came in for severe criticism by the Education Department itself. In its Annual Report for 1918, it stated:

In the present normal classes there is no time to give as much instruction as is really necessary. Normal class instructors have to contend with want of knowledge of all kinds. Many young men and women come to be trained, whose English is weak, whose knowledge of Elementary Arithmetic and Geography is defective and whose ignorance is amazing. The normal classes afford the instructors little time for their task. The need for Training Colleges is imperative. It is hoped that by 1921 there will be colleges both in Singapore and Penang. (40)

The idea of having Training Colleges was abandoned in 1920 when the Government gave an undertaking that it would provide for a faculty for the training of teachers in the proposed Raffles College. Raffles College when established would, it was hoped, supply all the trained and qualified teachers drawn from the pupils from the existing government and aided schools and they would fill the places in the higher classes usually taken by the European masters. Raffles College was only established in 1928. In the meantime attention was directed towards the improvement of Normal training. There was always the criticism that Normal training was not the best method of training teachers; the main disadvantage was that the trainees had to bear a full work-load in school in addition to their attendance at the Normal class. The Education Conference of 1923⁴¹ fixed the Cambridge School Certificate with a pass in Oral English as the minimum qualification for admission to Normal training. In 1925, the Normal training course⁴² was extended from 2 to 3 years and during the period of training the trainee was not supposed to be in charge of a class. However because of the shortage of teachers, it was found that it was not possible to allow the trainees to be free from the responsibility of taking charge of a class. Trainees were allowed 2 hours daily for observation of the teaching of the experienced teachers and 2 hours for study in the school to which they were attached. In 1924 the salary scheme for the locally recruited teachers was revised and for the first time superscale appointments for the locally recruited were provided for. In 1928, the Education Conference⁴³ made important recommendations which were put into effect in 1929 by the Education Department; the Conference submitted proposals for improving the syllabus for Normal training and for providing

different courses for elementary and for primary trainee teachers - previously a single course served for both elementary and primary teachers. The aim was no doubt to have training colleges for the teacher-trainees. For the time being, the improved scheme for Normal training in addition to a revised salary scheme for teachers made it possible for the Department to recruit "the better class of local boys and girls to take up teaching".⁴⁴

From 1907 when it was first introduced right up to its last year of existence in Singapore in 1959, the Normal training course was the basic training for the main core of teachers in the English schools in Malaya. Yet after the war, the value attached to the Normal Training Certificate became a major source of dissatisfaction among the teachers. The Department of Education considered the Certificate "deficient" by the standards of the Board of Education in the United Kingdom and holders of the Certificate were thus denied the standard opportunities of promotion to the higher posts in the education service.

Problem

The most important educational problem was that of the creation of a national identity out of the diverse races that inhabited Malaya. The vernacular schools, Malay, Chinese and Tamil, were meant exclusively for Malay, Chinese and Indian children, each in his own communal school, using his own language or dialect as the medium of instruction and existing in complete isolation from the children of the other races.⁴⁵ In other words, each communal school was deeply rooted in the mode of living and value system of its different ancestry. The parents of the children in the communal schools lived and worked in **their** own way and their social and other contacts with members of the other races did

not lead to a great measure of integration. In the 1930s the colonial government was concerned with the problems of "how and how much they should rule" Malaya while the "rising nationalist movements in China and India and later in Indonesia were claiming and in some instances reclaiming the loyalty of their people overseas".⁴⁶ Malaya was to be subservient to the political and economic needs of the United Kingdom. The essential condition was the existence of law and order and firm measures would be taken to preserve it.⁴⁷ The government did not pay a great deal of attention to the type of education it should provide for nation-building and studiously avoided any interference with the culture, customs and religions of the subject people.

The immigrant population of Malaya, whether Indonesian, Chinese or Indian, have always been subject to the pressures related to the political changes taking place in their respective countries of origin. The uncontrolled and unabated influx of immigrants into the country in the 1920s and 1930s had the effect of sharpening the cultural and political differences of each of the communal groups. And among the new immigrants was "an increasing number of educated men who came to fill white collar jobs and especially to become the teachers of children of the immigrants".⁴⁸ There was no doubt at all that some of the teachers in the vernacular schools became the active promoters of the various nationalist ideals, espoused either by the nascent national and international movements of Pan-Islamism or by Chinese or Indian or Indonesian nationalism or later by Communism.⁴⁹

English education, which was first started in the Straits Settlements, was extended to the Malay States. The urban Chinese and the Indian population were generally attracted to it. For the Malays,

the Malay College was set up in Kuala Kangsar; the College was originally established for the scions of the Malay aristocrats. The aided English schools catered for Chinese and Indian children as the Christian missions were not allowed to proselytise among the Malays. The English schools were the only schools that children from the different communities could come together. According to Carr-Saunders, the English schools in Malaya

have developed very much on the lines of schools in England. Through time the policy has been to free the curriculum from the demands of external examinations and there now remains only one, the Cambridge School Certificate Examination which is conducted at the same level as for United Kingdom schools but has been modified to suit local conditions. (50)

As Malaya was a British colony and English was the language of the administration and a large part of commerce, a knowledge of English was a passport to the better paid jobs. English education was seen as training for efficient clerks and it was the influence of the economic factor that made for the popularity of English education. As observed by Wong and Ee,

In a sense every English school was a commercial or vocational school, in that it was attended by children who studied the language for its commercial value and not as a form of mental discipline or equipment for their general development. The need for more vocational training was a corollary to the basis commercial interests of British Malaya. The English schools were attended by the boys of the mercantile class and the output of boys qualified for commercial or vocational employment was, more often than not, less than the demand. (51)

Tertiary institutions were only available to those with a proficiency in English. With the establishment of the Singapore Medical College in 1905 and Raffles College which provided courses in Arts and Science in Singapore in 1928 and the Kuala Lumpur Technical School and the Serdang School of Agriculture, only the English school leavers were able to seek admission to them. The English schools were the only avenues to the

technical, commercial and professional careers that were available in the country. The products of the vernacular schools were cut off from occupations that had any prestige and this became one of the major problems after the war.

The English school system created a class of people who possessed "a shallow veneer of Western culture and standards". English education served the beginning of a common identity. At worst, the identity "would have been a detribalised limbo between being English on the one hand and Chinese, Indian or Malay on the other".⁵² At best, the English educated would have been identified with a common outlook and value system that would form an acceptable basis for the building of a new 'Malayan' nation. And in the colonial period, the English school system had the effect of creating a gulf between the English educated and those educated in the vernacular schools.

The Chinese educated were denied an equitable place in the colonial scheme of things. They were absorbed as clerks or shop assistants in Chinese owned enterprises or became Chinese school teachers, apprentices in the few light industries or else earned their living as labourers and hawkers. The English school leavers however enjoyed greater opportunities of employment and also greater prospects of acquiring the knowledge that would qualify them for the more lucrative jobs and professions. To the Chinese educated, denied of these advantages because Chinese was not the official language, the products of the English school system appeared as a privileged class and "English speaking government servants the representatives of the reactionary foreign government".⁵³ The English educated were said to have no interest in the struggle for independence because they were more interested in the security of the established

colonial order; in the civil service⁵⁴ they saw their fight for independence from colonial rule in terms of Malayisation and better prospects for promotion to posts occupied by the expatriate officers and ended with their achieving their positions. There were of course many other reasons for the revolt of the Chinese educated against the colonial system - the Japanese war, the role of the Chinese educated in the resistance movement together with the general resurgence of nationalism in South East Asia - and this took place during a period when the English educated had opportunities of benefiting from the advance towards self-government.

Traditional Attitude

The attitude to education of the various promoters of education in Singapore, colonial or otherwise, can be described as markedly traditional. Singapore is the meeting ground of 4 cultural traditions - Western, Chinese, Islamic and Indian - and each is reflected in a system of education. The first Malay schools - the Koran schools - set out specifically to teach Malay children "the principal prayers in Arabic after studying the Arabic alphabet and the importance of leading an ordered life with emphasis on good character".⁵⁵ The first Chinese schools in Singapore had the task of teaching the ideographic writing of the Chinese language and the sacred lore of the Chinese sages in the different dialects.⁵⁶ Tamil education⁵⁷ was, very soon after it started, taken over by the various Christian missions which did their utmost to revive it in spite of the many difficulties it had to face in the smallness of the school population, apathy of parents, lack of suitable teachers and school premises and the shortage of textbooks; early Tamil education therefore had a Christian emphasis, like that of the other

aided schools using English as the medium of instruction. The Chinese schools later had for a period before the war been impregnated with the social and political ideologies derived from the ideals espoused by 2 different political parties in China. It can be said that life in a pre-war Chinese school was no more saturated by explicit social ideals and dogmas than say the Christian mission or the Islamic schools. The English system was introduced by Raffles and as a result we have an imported model which was evolved to serve the different purposes of English society and fit the different demands and conditions obtaining in that society. The schools today do not depart from their essentially traditional role; they aim at forming the character of the pupils and inculcate the "right" ideas in order to guide them towards a life to be led according to the moral standards and the accepted social ideology, which is that of nation-building, derived from the objectives and ideals of the Republic of Singapore. The teacher plays an important role in such a situation. The pupils are taught what has been prescribed or laid down by the accepted "authorities" and order in class is maintained according to prescribed rules. They have to bear and endure the present by learning and doing what has been laid down. Adult guidance is paramount, not individual initiative.

Colonial Education

There were many critics of the colonial policy of education. T. H. Silcock pointed out that there was a grave danger that the racial problems of Malaya would become in future years a source of strife and even war involving more than Malaya. In his Fabian pamphlet, addressed to the voter in the United Kingdom - "... what is happening there is important and can be influenced by your votes and your efforts to

influence public opinion ..." - Silcock saw the problem as one of building a nation in Malaya out of a people of 3 different races and the problem had to be solved if Malaya was to achieve self-government speedily, "for nationalism in Asia will not tolerate any colonial power which is not obviously trying to solve the problems of promoting self-government quickly".⁵⁸ A Pan-Malayan citizenship would be a focal point of all Malaysians and according to Silcock, it should be created as soon as possible. Rupert Emerson condemned the colonial policy of education as it merely aggravated the "existing racial tensions ... distinctly prejudicial to the general interest and the building of a harmonious community. ... The tremendous educational opportunity which was offered to the British by the prosperity of the Malayan government and by the profits which the rubber and the tin industries were drawing off has been almost completely missed as far as the Chinese and Indian communities are concerned".⁵⁹ To Victor Purcell, who returned to Malaya after the war, self-government would help in the process of nation-building. Malaya, according to him, should be developed on the basis of unity rather than diversity,

to move more rapidly to the development of that strength, self-reliance and common purpose for the promotion of self-government through nation-wide institutions in which the whole community can participate. (60)

The school was now considered with a much greater emphasis than previously as the vehicle of attitudes. Teachers had a major role to play in bridging the gulf that separated the Chinese, Malays and Indians. The Malayan Democratic Union, a political party that was formed in December, 1945, attracted many teachers from both the government and the aided schools in Singapore; it was an anti-colonial organisation and an intellectual movement of the English educated. Its major

political objective was a united Malaya and Singapore, preparing for self-government and independence.⁶¹ It saw the role of the school as the vehicle for building a common nationality and unity of the various groups of people. On the contribution to educational ideas by the M.D.U., Yeo Kim Wah said:

The M.D.U. was under the strong influence of the teaching profession and thus produced 2 closely reasoned educational documents from primary to university levels in 2 impressive articles - (1) The Educational Policy of the M.D.U. 1946, (2) The Memorandum of the M.D.U. to the Carr-Saunders Commission of 1947.

It helped to crystallise public opinion for the establishment of the University of Malaya and many principles propounded have been incorporated in Singapore's education system - (a) integrated school system, (b) multilingualism in schools and (c) financing the educational service through income tax.⁽⁶²⁾

D. D. Chelliah,⁶³ an active member in the Professional sub-committee of the Singapore Teachers' Union in the first few years of its existence, had advocated in 1940 a bilingual education for all as the solution to the problems of education in a multi-racial society. In his view, the language and culture of the different social groups should be preserved in the various vernacular schools for the first 4 years of education and English should then be taught thereafter as the common language and used in the tertiary institutions as the medium of instruction. There were those who could not see why any emphasis should be placed on vernacular education; V. E. Hendershot⁶⁴ for instance considered Chinese schools too foreign to the Malayan environment. The Carr-Saunders' Commission⁶⁵ in its Report introduced a fresh and inspiring note in the oppressive colonial atmosphere in the first few years immediately after the war. It was concerned, among other things, with the role the university could play in a multi-racial society. The various races had to live under a common administrative, legal and

economic system and the facts of the situation "preclude any cantonisation of the country". The university could foster the growth of citizenship by focussing on problems common to all, "refine, preserve all that is best in local traditions" and safeguard the wealth and richness of cultural diversity. The university was to be the common possession of the 3 communities and for a start the Commission recommended Chinese, Malay and Indian Studies to be instituted in the proposed university. The University of Malaya, according to the Commission,

would provide for the first time a common centre where varieties of race, religion and economic interest could mingle in a joint endeavour. We feel convinced that if a university were created at this juncture, it would secure a firm loyalty and an enthusiastic co-operation from all sections of the country. (66)

The post-war policy of education in Singapore was based on the expansion of English education at the expense of vernacular education. English schools were "designed" to produce good and loyal citizens of Singapore; Chinese language and the cultural ties which the Chinese had with China were not the ingredients that went to make the loyal Singapore citizen. This was the first time in the history of Singapore that the colonial government thought in terms of building a nation in a multi-racial society. Its solution was to recast a segregated education structure into one in which it would have a more comprehensive control, with official encouragement given to English schools; the Chinese schools, ascribed an unMalayan role, would, it hoped, be contained eventually. F. Mason, writing about the Ten-Year Plan and the Five-Year Supplementary Plan for education in Singapore, said:

Implicit, if not explicit, in all this is the attempt to draw away from the Chinese-medium schools, especially the smaller private schools over which the Government exercises very little

control and into schools over which the Government could exercise considerable supervision. The exponents of this policy point out that in the English-medium school all races are brought together and the curriculum and school activities are designed to produce loyal citizens of Singapore.

They also claim that the Chinese schools are for one race only and that their curriculum gives insufficient emphasis to Malaya and to making the pupils good citizens of Singapore. (67)

Singapore was to be prepared for eventual self-government. The post-war period however coincided with political changes in the Chinese mainland and what was most important, as observed by Gwee Yee Hean, was the change of orientation in the outlook of the Chinese educated. "In this new setting," wrote Gwee, "the majority of the Chinese had decided to make Singapore their homeland and to sever the 'overseas Chinese' relationship with China, both Peking and Taiwan".⁶⁸ In the face of the new colonial policy on education, the Chinese educated had to fight for an equitable and honourable place for the Chinese language and culture in a self-governing Singapore within a united Malaya. An event in the Malay Peninsula had a great effect on the thinking of the Chinese educated.

The concern of the Chinese was heightened by a Malay cultural movement which had successfully campaigned for the introduction of a Malay-based language and education policy on the mainland. (69)

The language issue was effectively exploited by a strong anti-colonial movement which emerged in 1954; political agitation, student unrest in the Chinese middle schools, and riots took place. The Report of the All-Party Education Committee⁷⁰ in 1956 was the result of the most persistent and sustained agitation. It was accepted by the party in power, the Labour Front-Alliance, and has remained the basis of the present education structure - parity of treatment for the 4 systems of education.

Teachers' Criticisms

In the years before the war, the trend of Malayan education, with its makeshift Malayan School Certificates and Special English papers was towards the production of clerks for government and mercantile offices, book-keepers and store-keepers, with a few scholarships to England to pacify ambitious youth.

Cheong Hock Hai.⁷¹

The schools served primarily as a market for labour. There was no interest shown in the quantitative changes that should have been made - more school facilities, more teachers, smaller classes, higher salaries for teachers; there was scant interest shown in making the qualitative changes - in the content and methods of instruction. Colonial education was solely interested in the preservation of the status quo and no qualitative change in the content could be envisaged other than that based on the colonial system; the teachers in the S.T.U. would like to see changes made in the content based on an orientation to a wholly new concept of a more democratic society - a society without colonialism. School life became a hot house environment; it did not initiate the young pupils into the realities of life outside and instead it became a temporary escape from them. Tan Teik Kooi, in his article in the Malayan Educator, questioned the aims of colonial education. Talking about the secondary school pupils, he said:

They complete their secondary education insulated from the reality of what makes up the outside world. In brief, we are educating our children for failure, for frigid reality cannot but turn glowing expectation into introspective and frustrated cynicism. (72)

White collar jobs were socially preferable than that of the technicians and skilled mechanics and the colonial education system perpetuated the attitude. He also criticised the declining academic standards. The strain of the post-war period had left its marks deep in the

children and in the schools. There was the post-war tiredness. But there were also other factors which could have been corrected. He continued:

There may be the problem of large classes and bad buildings but even when these factors are taken into account, have we really made the searching diagnosis that is required? It is essential for the sound development of the pupil that classes be small, buildings healthy and allowances made for the effects of the war. But when that is done there remains the central problem of the curriculum. Is education a thing of shreds and patches? (73)

He raised many other issues of importance in education and claimed that there was sufficient evidence for an inquiry into all the criticisms made - criticisms that came from those who were anxious that the schools should succeed. "Neither the teachers nor the country as a whole can afford to neglect the criticisms that are being made".

Decision-making in education remained the monopoly of the colonial officials. The teachers' unions since their formation had to fight for a right to have a say in the formulation of policies. After the war, the Singapore Teachers' Union associated with the teachers' unions in the Malay Peninsula as policy-making was always of a Pan-Malayan character. The Directors of Education however made their own decisions; they did not consider the views, arguments and reasons of the teachers as a whole. The teachers' call for an inquiry into the state of education was not considered. It is significant that the colonial period was distinguished for the poverty of educational research and ideas of any consequence.

English colonial education was based on the traditional concept of education, developed in an environment where, according to Wyn Williams, "industrialisation encouraged men to think in terms of dividing knowledge and skills into useful stage by stage sections and where the

structure of society required that the amount of creativity children should be allowed to develop should be strictly limited".⁷⁴ The subject matter was not based on the most valuable experiences of the people of Malaya, but that of the Europeans and it transmitted a stock of information about the English world that was not relevant to the Malayan child. The second language in the English school was not considered important at all; science and technical subjects were neglected. Colonial education had a conservative bias. K. M. Panikkar, writing on the Afro-Asian States and their problems, discussed education in a subject country thus:

The provision of an education which is conducive to mental unrest is not in the interests of a foreign government. The text books taught in schools and the attitude of mind sought to be created in these institutions tended naturally to depreciate national cultures and to emphasise the virtues of foreign rule. To create a moral defeatism among the people would seem to have been one of the purposes of colonial education. (75)

The education system created an attitude of submission to and acceptance of the values and standards of the colonial system and the English educated as a whole were subjected to and assimilated piecemeal into the standards of colonial administration and they subsequently perpetuated the same values and standards. An example was the insistence on the Honours degree for the top posts in the administration in later years. This was a method by means of which the Europeans could retain their monopoly of the top posts in a period when the call for self-government and independence was growing more persistent; the insistence on the Honours degree from a University in the United Kingdom had deprived many of the locally recruited graduates from the important posts in the Education Departments. The colonial system therefore created extreme inequalities of status and power between the locally

recruited teachers and the European teachers. The bid for equality of status on the part of the teachers' unions was always resisted or undervalued by the colonial establishment.

Education and the education service were inextricably linked with politics. The purpose of education was not seen as a means of freeing the pupils from the inertia of ignorance and superstition; it was not to make them thinking, critical human beings, able to participate fully in the affairs of the Malayan society. Education was seen in terms of academic standards and the turning out of carefully graded products for government and commerce in order to meet the political and economic needs of the United Kingdom, not the needs of the Malayan society.

Education, to the Malayan Teachers' Union, was essentially the acquisition of knowledge and critical habits. The colonial system used education to inculcate colonial values and standards. Knowledge should not be dead, inert stuff. The Malayan Educator criticising Normal instructors stated:

What is being done to make the teachers think? Practically nothing! Normal class instructors follow the pattern of the usual run of classroom instructions of teaching, that is, pouring into parched minds the notes of grandfather's days to aid the present day student along. ...

Are students ever told that today's wisdom may be tomorrow's folly? ... Are they taught to dispute generally held notions? To a very, very small extent, this may be done here and there by sincere and progressive educators but as a matter of general practice the idea is inculcated that the young should accept the accumulated wisdom of the old and the pupil the weight of learning of his teacher who may in his turn be only paying lip service to the ideas he expressed because it is politic to do so. (76)

The M.T.U. like the rest of the English educated in the country supported the establishment of the University of Malaya but it warned against the homage and worship of a University degree, a thing indirectly encouraged by the Colonial administration by their insistence on the

Honours degree for those who wanted to occupy the important posts in the education and other services. The editorial had this to say:

... we teachers strongly support the establishment of a University of Malaya and we press for the recruitment of teachers from this University but we do not blindly fall down before a degree and worship another golden calf.

The university affords an opportunity for intellectual growth and a larger field of social contacts but the degree is no hallmark of intellectual merit ... Present day circumstances demand this precious parchment but let us not mistake the shadow for the substance. The world's leading intellectuals had no academic guidance to lead them astray. There is one great danger in the cherished academic life, the danger of being pall-bearers of the hoary culture of a hallowed past and believing that here alone sits wisdom in cap and gown. (77)

The editorial also pointed out the danger of overestimating the value of a university degree by citing an example. Professor E.G.H. Dobby, in a talk in Penang in September, 1948, piously expressed being "appalled" that Normal trained teachers possessing only the Cambridge School Certificate were teaching in the highest classes in some of the excellent schools in Penang. Commenting on this, the editorial continued:

The University degree has its academic value but that it is essential to intellectual progress is just poppy-cock. The worth inheres in the man and not in his attire. ... The record of the Normal trained teachers is its own defence and does not need the support of our light pen. If our efforts awaken in our pupils an inquiring turn of mind and application to studies the road to intellectual progress remains wide open though universities be bypassed. (78)

The advice it offered teachers was:

... Keep an open mind, examine your authorities, don't worship them; ask and don't humbly receive; have the courage to change your aims when the mass of evidence demands a change; and finally guard against being dogmatic. We teachers have to take ourselves firmly in hand and train our pupils to weigh and consider rather than to store up learned lumber in their heads. Books are best for storing factual information, heads are best for weighing evidence and striking a balance. Unless the educators keep eternally at school they become at best but teachers of yesteryear's dead facts. (79)

As seen by the M.T.U., education was essentially a critical activity. Pupils should be encouraged to think independently, be sceptical and inquisitive. Taking it to its logical conclusion, it should look into areas that could be considered sensitive - like the colonial system as a whole; it should look into and question the very foundations of society and find the goal and the procedure necessary for building a more democratic society. A concept of education like that propounded by the M.T.U. would not unnaturally be considered as subversive, calculated to bring about the downfall of the colonial system. The right to think independently and ask questions that went to the very roots of the colonial system was essential for the building of a more democratic society, which the teachers fondly hoped, would emerge with the disappearance of colonialism.

Colonial Establishment

The establishment was made up of a small group of expatriates in senior, political, official and influential positions, with common assumptions about political opinions and the correct behaviour. They were all selected by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In post-war Malaya, the Directors of Education and their hard core of professional bureaucrats in the education service were highly skilled and educated men who had spent the major part of their working life in the bureaucracy; they could rise above the civil service routine and exercise policy-making functions. This was evident enough to give rise to statements that the expatriate civil service in fact represented the Government.⁸⁰ They were not genuine bureaucrats as they could not possibly be politically neutral. Any erosion of their power, any dilution of their ranks by the addition of the locally recruited had

political significance and would be resisted as firmly as possible.

And even if the locally recruited had the qualifications demanded they would not be paid at the same rate as that of the expatriates of the "same" status; the Intermediate Scheme (or the Special Scheme) in the education service was an example. Another example can be seen from the account given by C. Gamba as follows:

In 1952 the T.U.A.M. promoted a Malayan Indian to the position of Assistant Trade Union Adviser. He had a place for him on the establishment. His salary, the T.U.A.M. ruled, was to be equal to that of his European Assistant T.U.A. The Establishment Officer, Chief Secretariat, Kuala Lumpur, got in touch with the T.U.A.M. querying the salary to the Indian A.T.U.A. The T.U.A.M. explained that the Indian officer was doing a full job as A.T.U.A. and had been promoted to that position. The Establishment Officer said he understood that point but why put the Indian on the same salary scale as the European? "You cannot," he said, "pay the Asian the same as the European". At this point the T.U.A.M. made it clear that the Indian officer was now being paid a certain rate and there was nothing that could be done about it. The Establishment Officer replied that the matter could stand but that it had created a bad precedent. In 1955, when the European Heads of Department appeared before the Federation Malayanisation Commission, their statements showed that they considered as date for full Malayanisation of their Departments that date which would coincide with their own retirement. (81)

Paper 197 of 1946 spelt out the new recruitment policy; it stated that self-government were to be a reality, the government departments had to be staffed to the greatest possible extent with the locally recruited personnel. The expatriate officers drew up their own rules of competitive recruitment; they sometimes bypassed the rules and therefore blocked promotions and demoralised the locally recruited in the civil service. At the Malayanisation Commission hearings, the following point was brought out:

On the question of Malayanisation you will find that the expatriate officers gang up together against the local officers. Take for example, the Education Department. In the Department 2 local officers might be found - one with the professional qualifications of a teacher, the other with administrative

experience. Both of them would not be appointed owing to the fact that the Head of Department, the permanent head, would say that the administrative officer lacks professional qualifications and the professional officer lacks administrative experience. This is the sort of thing that goes on. (82)

The politics and administration of education in the immediate post-war period bristled with problems. They had to grapple with problems of rehabilitation, an unprecedented expansion in education, the Chinese School problem, not to mention the challenges posed by the S.T.U. and the Graduate Teachers' Association which was formed for the purpose of securing equitable salaries for graduates and equal status of the locally recruited graduates with the expatriates in the Colonial Education Service. With self-government in Singapore in 1955, the civil service was still under the control of the Secretary of State. However the Ministry of Education, which replaced the Department of Education, was the responsibility of the elected Minister; the colonial government reserved for itself the control over defence, external defence, finance and the civil service. In pre-war Malaya, the expatriates had never lost their confidence and had built up an apparatus that was hidebound and cluttered with procedures and rules for the civil service. They claimed they had all the necessary information and experience for making educational policies for hundreds of thousands of young Malaysians and did not encourage any discussion or examination of the policies they had offered. Critical literature on colonial education was almost non-existent except for a few academic dissertations. There was a lack of social inquiry and social theorising of a higher level and the colonial atmosphere did not encourage the free, forceful and disinterested discussion of issues of public education. With the establishment of teachers' unions after the

war, there was a "divine discontent" with things as they had been. The rapid pace of events added to the urgency for changes that would make for a more democratic society, once colonialism was gone. The S.T.U. and the other teachers' unions pressed on with their claims. The Director of Education and his professional officers in the Ministry could not take things for granted. And it was at the proceedings of the Malayanisation Commission in Singapore that the frozen ground of civil service arrogance was broken.

CHAPTER 2

TEACHERS AND THEIR WORKING CONDITIONS

The basic core of teachers in the English schools had always consisted of the products of a system of Normal training. This form of training as it was constituted until it was abolished had its origin in the recommendations of the Education Conference in 1925; Normal training was to be offered to untrained teachers who had obtained the Cambridge School Certificate with a pass in Oral English and its course was to be extended from 2 to 3 years. The recommendations were put into effect in 1926. There were two grades of Normal trainees:- (1) those doing observation and they were designated as Class III teachers and (2) those who had to do full-time teaching and they were designated Class IV teachers. After the war, all the trainees had to do full-time teaching but "whenever the exigencies of the case allowed it, trainees were not expected to devote their full-time to teaching but spend a considerable portion of it observing lessons conducted by trained teachers thereby gaining valuable practical experience in conducting lessons and handling classes".¹ After qualifying, the men were classified as Class I teachers and the women as Class II teachers. They were on par with the locally recruited graduates from Raffles College or from other universities except that the graduates were paid an additional allowance for their academic qualifications and the allowance paid was pensionable. The

European teachers were on a completely different scheme in the Malayan Education Service.

For the training² of teachers for the upper classes, the Education Conference in 1918 recommended sending selected local teachers to the University of Hong Kong and until 1928, the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States gave scholarships for that purpose. After 1928, scholarships were awarded for study at Raffles College; in its first year, 34 of the 43 students were indentured students taking courses in preparation for a teaching career in either the government or government aided English schools. Up to 1934, most of the graduates became teachers but others who graduated later began to enter the civil service and the business world. From 1938 to 1941, those intending to become teachers had been given a 4th year post-graduate course in education; a chair was instituted for this purpose in 1938. Before that year, education was part of the undergraduate course leading to the Raffles College Diploma. There were, however, very few teachers with postgraduate training in education. After the war, the chair for education was vacant.

The Raffles College graduates usually became teachers in the Middle (Standards II-V) and Secondary (Standard VI-School Certificate) Departments of schools in Malaya.

The hallmark of professional ability for non-graduate teachers was the Normal Training Certificate, issued by the Education Departments after the successful completion of the three-year course. Professional standard pre-war was set by the Director of Education, Straits Settlements; he was also the Adviser on Education in the Malay States. The various teachers' associations were never ever in the position to

control professional standards and it was up to the Director-Adviser to raise (which was rarely) the professional standard or lower (which was often) and thus devalue the professional certificates in order to control the supply of teachers or to cut down expenditure. After the war and the resumption of civil government on 1st April, 1946, separate Directors of Education were appointed for the Malayan Union³ and Singapore; the two Departments worked in close liaison on all matters of common policy. They were responsible for professional standards and the contradictory values given to professional certificates at different times in the short history of the teachers in Singapore and the Malaya Peninsula.

There were many examples of the "irregularity" with regard to the evaluation of professional qualifications and other establishment matters concerning the locally recruited teachers. The reasons, given or implied, were almost always that of financial stringency. For example, the students⁴ who were sent to Raffles College in 1930 and 1931 for a 3-year course went with an understanding that after graduation they would receive, on appointment as teachers, a salary like that of the Normal trained but with a graduate allowance of \$50/- p.m. and a written agreement had in fact been made with the Government before they joined Raffles College. When they graduated, they were given an initial salary of \$130/- p.m. (for men) or \$100/- p.m. (for women) but the graduate allowance was only \$25/- p.m. There was cause for resentment. But allowances and salaries were announced by Government Notifications in the Gazettes and there was nothing that unorganized teachers and the effete teachers' associations could do with their petitions. Changes in terms of employment and in allowances could also

be made by a Notification which superceded past Notifications as in the following example:

Government Notification No. 1754
7th September, 1928.

- 9(a). A \$20/- p.m. pensionable allowance will be paid to teachers who have hold Government Scholarships at Hong Kong University, or at Raffles College, and passed the Intermediate Examination, and a similar allowance to Class I Teachers who as private resident students and at their own expense have obtained the Intermediate Pass at Hongkong or any other University within the British Empire approved by the Director of Education, or at Raffles College, or as private students and at their own expense have obtained the External Intermediate Pass at any University within the United Kingdom approved by the Director of Education. These allowances will only be paid for passes in the Faculty of Arts or the Faculty of Science.
- (b). A \$50/- p.m. pensionable allowance will be paid to such ex-scholars and Class I Teachers who have obtained a B.A. or B.Sc. under similar circumstances and conditions, or have obtained a Diploma after a three years' course at Raffles College. (5)

Government Notification No. 1583.
19th August, 1932.

- 9(a). A \$25/- p.m. pensionable allowance will be paid to teachers who have obtained a Diploma on the completion of a three year course at Raffles College.

Notifications Nos. 1754, 759 and 994 published in the Gazettes of the 7th September 1928, 22nd April, 1932, and 20th May, 1932 respectively are hereby cancelled. (6)

No reasons were given or deemed necessary. If the allowance was cut because of financial stringency brought about by the slump, this pensionable allowance was not restored to its former level when normal conditions returned.

There were other instances.

1. As a slump measure, women teachers employed after June, 1928 were told they would be placed on a temporary basis on marriage. In Johore, there were married women teachers who, because of their long service, were termed as "permanent temporaries". They remained temporary long after the war and were denied the benefits enjoyed by those on the permanent

establishment, e.g. pensions or provident fund. And when teachers were given the benefit of the Japanese occupation period, namely 4 increments and 4 years added to their service, women teachers who were married during the occupation years were denied the increments and their years of service during the occupation period were not counted as years of service as in the case of their other colleagues, who were either men teachers or unmarried women teachers. (7)

2. There was always an urgent need for teachers. But teachers who qualified in 1932 and in 1933 were not given employment because of the slump. They were employed a few years later and lost in increments and seniority in spite of the fact that the F.S. circular of 1933 stated that "there should be no loss of seniority" where these teachers were concerned". (8)

Many teachers during the slump were retrenched⁹ although some of them had served the Education Department in their respective State or Settlement for considerable periods before their retrenchment. Later some of them were re-employed in the education service but on widely different terms: some started at the initial salary (i.e. \$130/- p.m. for men or \$100/- p.m. for women) while others drew the salary they had last drawn at the time of retrenchment.

It was the contention of the teachers concerned after the war that since the Education Departments recognised that increments should be given for the period of Japanese occupation, Government should then restore increments lost to the retrenched for in both cases almost similar circumstances, entirely beyond the control of the teachers concerned, had affected them and thus brought on the hiatus.

The education system of the Colony of Singapore was a parallel to the system that existed in Malaya of which Singapore was a part pre-war. The English schools were completely staffed and controlled by the Government. The completely aided English schools were the mission schools and their teachers, whose salaries were paid by the Government, have never been regarded as Government servants.

There were, before and after the war, 2 divisions of teachers in the Malayan Education service, one open exclusively to Europeans and the other to the locally recruited teachers.

European Teachers

They began their careers as Assistant Masters at the initial salary of \$400/- p.m. and rose, with annual increments of \$25/- to \$800/-, in the capacity of Headmasters of Elementary schools and that of Acting Inspectors of Schools. On being promoted to superscale appointments (i.e. Superintendents of Education, Headmasters of Secondary Schools, Senior Inspector of Schools, Deputy Director of Education and Director of Education), they rose in salary from \$850/- p.m. to \$1050/- p.m.

European women were recruited at \$300/- p.m. and rose with annual increments of \$25/- to \$500/- on the time scale. The superscale appointments for European women carried salaries of \$600/- p.m.

Locally Recruited Teachers

The men, Normal-trained, began as Assistant Masters at \$130/- p.m. and worked their way up the time scale with annual increments of \$10/- to the maximum at \$300/- p.m. They usually retired after 30 or 35 years of service in the same capacity, having marked time on the maximum salary (\$300/-) for 13 years or more.

The women, Normal-trained, began at \$100/- p.m. and their time scale took them with annual increments of \$10/- to their maximum of \$200/- p.m.

Locally recruited teachers with university degrees received in addition a pensionable allowance of \$25/- p.m., if recruited after 1932, or \$50/- p.m., if recruited before 1932.

The glaring disparity of the salary schemes for the European and the locally recruited teachers in the Malayan Education Service can be seen in the following comparison:

<u>Time Scale</u>	
<u>European Men</u>	<u>Local Men</u>
Initial salary \$400 p.m.	Maximum \$ 300 p.m. (Normal-trained) Maximum \$325 p.m. (Graduate)
<u>European Women</u>	<u>Local Women</u>
Initial salary \$300 p.m.	Maximum \$200 p.m. (Normal-trained) Maximum \$225 p.m. (Graduate)

The initial salary of a European male recruit was 133% of the maximum at which most local male teachers retired. And the initial salary of a European woman teacher was 150% of the maximum at which most local women teachers retired. Further comparison of the initial salaries of the European teachers with the superscales of the locally recruited teachers shows the extent to which the disparity was carried.

<u>European Men</u>	<u>Local Men</u>
Initial salary \$400 p.m.	Superscale "B" \$300 p.m. Superscale "A" \$400 p.m.
<u>European Women</u>	<u>Local Women</u>
Initial salary \$300 p.m.	Superscale "D" \$250 p.m. Superscale "C" \$300 p.m.

From the comparison, a local male teacher was still not considered equal to the European recruit although the local teacher had already put in 17 years of service to reach his time scale maximum and a further period of "meritorious" service before he was put on Superscale "B". And after another selection, at which his "exceptional ability" was proved, he would be placed on Superscale "A" before he was deemed "equal" to the rawest European recruit. The situation was the same

with the local women teachers. A comparison of the number of European and local superscale appointments also shows disparity. Although in theory not more than 5% of qualified teachers could be appointed to each of the superscales, in practice, according to the Singapore Teachers' Union, the 5% had not been adhered to and "there were occasions when the percentage had been so small as to be negligible".¹⁰ The number of superscale appointments for European men and women worked out at approximately 20% of the total number of European teachers; the calculation was made by the S.T.U. on the 1941 figures. At best, 10% only of the total number of qualified local teachers were eligible for superscale appointments. There was therefore a big difference in actual opportunities between the European teachers and the locally recruited. The S.T.U. commented:

Practically every European had the opportunity of holding at least one of the superscale appointments before retiring; hundreds of Asiatic teachers, however had to retire on nothing more than the time scale maximum (\$300 for men and \$200 for women). (11)

The superscale scheme for the locally recruited teachers deprived the vast majority of them of opportunities for advancement and of incentive to make further progress. This state of affairs was detrimental to efficiency and lowered the morale of the locally recruited teachers; a teacher marking time for years on the time scale maximum could easily lose interest in his work and the younger teacher would not be encouraged to put in his best effort when he realised that he would have to mark time behind a long queue of older teachers.

The position of the locally recruited Trade School Instructors¹² also told the same story of "unjustifiable disparity". European

instructors drew an initial salary of \$400/- p.m. and rose with annual increments of \$25/- p.m. to \$750/- p.m. whereas the locally recruited instructors began at \$120/- p.m. and worked their way up the time scale with annual increments of \$10/- to reach their maximum of \$250/- p.m.

Within the Malayan Education service, the two schemes, one for the European teachers and the other for the locally recruited teachers in both the time-scales and superscales, did not bear any relationship at all to one another. After the war, the locally recruited teachers were inspired by the achievements of the N.U.T. of England and Wales which had reached agreement with the new Burnham Committee in May, 1944 on the need for a basic scale for all qualified teachers.¹³ However the colonial establishment continued with their pre-war views and beliefs in racial superiority and discriminatory practices. The pre-war mind and attitudes of the colonial administrators did not disappear with the departure of these administrators. Almost all the present day problems of the teachers - their organisation, leadership, professional status, salary schemes and working conditions - cannot be separated from the colonial past, especially the colonial policies in the immediate post-war years.

White Paper 197

Of particular relevance were the principles laid down in the Colonial White Paper No. 197 on "Organisation of the Colonial Service", issued in 1946. The White Paper was most explicit on the question of the determination of salaries.¹⁴

1. The salaries of all posts in the public service of a colony should be determined according to the nature of the work and the relative responsibilities irrespective of the race or domicile of the individuals occupying the posts.

2. The salaries should be fixed at rates applicable to locally recruited staff, even though there may for the time being be grades in which few or no locally recruited officers are in fact serving.
3. In fixing these basic salaries regard should be paid to the relevant local circumstances, such as the ruling income levels in those classes of the community from which the public service is or will be recruited.
4. Where the salaries so fixed are insufficient to attract and retain officers from overseas, expatriate pay should be provided for such officers.

The teachers who joined the Singapore Teachers' Union set great store on the principles enunciated in the White Paper, particularly that salaries should be fixed according to the nature of the work and relative responsibilities. It was the contention of the S.T.U. that the European teachers and the locally recruited "have prepared pupils for the same examinations, have undertaken similar extra-mural activities, have worked successfully as headmasters, have carried out specialist work with equal success and in administrative capacities, as acting or temporary Inspectors of Schools, local teachers have proved themselves as able as Europeans".¹⁵ The S.T.U. in April, 1947 pressed for an end of the discriminatory rates of pay and agitated for the establishment of a unified education service in the sense that the salaries of European teachers and that of the locally recruited should bear the same proper and equitable relationship with one another in one service. The idea of a unified education service was inspired by the success of the N.U.T. in gaining a "professional" basic scale for all qualified teachers in the United Kingdom.

One implication of the unified education service was that every teacher should have the opportunity of being considered for any of the important positions in the service. There was however a special problem.

The top echelon of the Civil Service comprised personnel appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London - i.e. the higher administrative and executive European officials - and they wielded power. In the Malayan Educational Service, as in the other services, the substitution of locally recruited teachers for European officers to occupy administrative and superscale appointments in the service carried political significance and was not encouraged.

There were European teachers without any university degree but they enjoyed salaries in every respect identical with those with degrees and were eligible for promotion and were in fact promoted to the highest posts of the superscale. The so-called Intermediate Scheme (or Special Service)¹⁶ in which there were only 3 locally recruited teachers in the whole of Malaya and Singapore was a sham. The requirements needed for entry to the scheme were an Honours degree and a Diploma in Education from a British University. This was selection based merely on British qualifications and the facilities in Malaya and Singapore for acquiring such qualifications were non-existent. Europeans however were not debarred from the Malayan Education Service proper even though they did not possess any degree. There was a danger that the Education Department was making a shibboleth of the Honours degree and the Diploma in Education so that only European teachers, who had every opportunity of acquiring such qualifications, could retain a monopoly of the administrative jobs. The Intermediate Scheme, an inferior scheme compared with that for European teachers, for the locally recruited was just a sop. At any rate, an Honours degree was no guarantee of or an index to great administrative acumen. The Raffles College Diploma with the Postgraduate Training in Education

did not give its holder a chance of competing for the important posts in the Education Departments as he was considered "unsuitable" without an Honours degree from a British University. The present wide disparity in salary scales between the Honours degree teachers and the other other categories of teachers (viz., Pass degree graduate and non-graduate teachers) had its origin here. Vigorous protests were made by the S.T.U. - and the Malayan Teachers' Union (M.T.U.) - that "paper" qualifications, facilities for acquiring which did not exist in Malaya, should not be asked for. It was clear that the colonial policy of recruitment to the important posts was confined to the special class of men selected by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Graduate Teachers' Association that was formed in Singapore later to protect graduate interests aspired to the status and salaries of the European teachers in the Malayan Education Service; this was in line with the drive for equitable salaries and equality of status with the Europeans in the civil service by the Stamford Club and its Pan-Malayan Council, a body of locally recruited graduates from Raffles College.

Children's Allowances

A cause of resentment of the locally recruited teachers was the introduction of Children's Allowances in 1937. The McGregor Committee on Temporary Allowances,¹⁷ which recommended the Children's Allowances for European officers, argued that it was necessary for the Europeans to educate their children in England from young and this burden was very heavy whereas there was no such financial burden on the locally recruited; the allowances were recommended over and above the salaries paid to European officers which were considered generally adequate. By a curious sophistry of language, the allowances were called 'educational'

although the parents of the child drew the allowance from the day the child was born and such an allowance would continue throughout the child's educational life and not only when the officer was in Malaya.

The allowance gave the child an opportunity to obtain a much higher form of education than the European officer would have been able to afford had he been a civil servant in England, and therefore the explanation that the allowance was the means of redressing the balance between what the officer lost by being in Malaya and his probable position in England, lacked valid foundation. The suggestion that the Asian could apply for the same treatment was pure myth. (18)

The following table¹⁹ shows the allowances which were available to the European officers.

Officers on a salary scale the maximum of which is not less than	Monthly Allowance	Duration	Accumulated Total (2 children)
A. \$700 p.m.	\$70 for 1st child \$50 for 2nd child	18 years	\$26,360
B. \$600 p.m.	\$50 for 1st child \$35 for 2nd child	16 years	\$16,500
C. Under \$600 p.m.	\$30 for 1st child \$20 for 2nd child	16 years	\$9,720

For European officers with more than one child, the second child would automatically draw the "first child's allowance" when the latter reached the appropriate age (of 18 or 16) as specified in column 3 and the third child would take the place of the second child, and so on.

The totals shown in column 4 were calculated on the basis of 2 children with an age difference of 1 year. If the children came at intervals of more than a year or if there were more than 2 children, the European officer would obviously be entitled to a much bigger sum from this scheme.

If has been calculated that no less of a sum than \$30,000 can be collected by a European officer with four children over a period of twenty years. The McGregor allowances when calculated constitute tidy fortunes which could be utilised for the higher education of European children. (20)

This was deeply resented by the locally recruited personnel who "are just as anxious as Europeans that their children should not be debarred from any careers for lack of proper qualifications, university or otherwise".²¹ The McGregor Committee was set up to look into the inadequate 'Asiatic' salaries paid but it made recommendations granting only allowances for children of European officers in the civil service.

The Asian civil servants furthermore complained that a clerk in the Straits Settlements General Clerical Service drew 55 dollars per month, and 35 dollars in the Federated Malay States, after having obtained the Senior Cambridge School Certificate. The European child in Malaya had been granted 70 dollars per month by the Committee. (22)

In addition to handsome allowances for their children, European teachers were either provided with quarters or they received a housing allowance; the leave conditions and pension rights were far superior to that of the locally recruited teachers; promotion to all the higher appointments and to the superscales in the education service was available to them. However in the face of the trade unionism of teachers, the growing underswell of resentment against colonial rule, racial discrimination and the denial of democratic rights, the colonial establishment had to think of new forms and techniques to meet new conditions - conditions that were a far cry from the somnolent political

climate of pre-war Malaya.

Aided School Teachers

Apart from the 'unjustifiable disparity' that existed between European and the locally recruited teachers, there was also the disparity in the terms of service between government English school teachers and aided school teachers. They have not been regarded as government employees although Government's financial contributions to the cost of the aided schools have safeguarded the terms of employment of aided school teachers. But it was the Government's contention that although it paid serving teachers in aided schools on the same scale as their government colleagues, it did not have to extend the same pension rights to aided school teachers after they had retired. It would not grant them free medical facilities; they were not eligible for quarters, allocated to a few fortunate Government school teachers and for which a nominal rent was paid; they were also denied the use of government holiday bungalows.

The bulk of the English education has been provided by government schools and aided schools. They constitute 2 separate services.

1. Government service where all persons employed in government English schools are direct employees of the Government and the schools are under the direction and control of the Director of Education. The teachers are employed on the same terms as all the other government servants and are entitled to superannuation benefits.
2. An aided school service where all the teachers employed are direct employees of one of the Aided School Authorities. The Government has accepted a limited financial commitment - salaries of approved subordinate staff, a capitation grant per pupil and donation to Provident Fund less the school fees collected. The one sanction that Government possesses to ensure that the required standards are maintained is the withdrawal of the subsidy. (23)

The subsidy is paid to the Aided School Authorities and by this

addition to their funds, they are enabled to pay their teachers the rates of salaries laid down by the Government. And if an aided school should decide at any time that it would carry on without Government subsidy, it would be at liberty, subject of course to existing contractual terms, to change the terms of service of its teachers in any way it pleased.

It was the contention of the teachers' unions since the days of the teachers' associations that the Government should extend its financial responsibility to include provision of pensions for aided school teachers on terms similar to that of government school teachers. The Provident Fund contributions by Government were inadequate.

... Assuming that a Government Aided School Teacher starts work at the age of 21 years, with an initial salary of \$130/- per month, he will after 30 years' continuous service be able to contribute \$4,584, which with the Government donation of an equal amount will give him a sum of \$9,168. This amount when invested at $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ per annum will give him a return of \$10.19 a month. At the age of fifty therefore with a wife to support, a Government Aided School Teacher has to adopt the standard of living of the poorest paid labourers. (24)

This situation was aggravated if the aided school teacher had children of school age to support. The Provident Fund scheme was an inferior scheme when compared to the pension scheme of the Government teachers. The Government teacher with a similar length of service and the same maximum salary could receive a monthly reduced pension of \$131.25 together with an interest of \$10.94 on his gratuity at $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ per annum.²⁵ The aided school teacher, in order to make up for the poor retirement benefit, had to save part of his earnings, while still in service, for investment in some kind of insurance and was thus reduced to a lower standard of living. The older teachers in the aided schools faced a bleak future. The situation was made worse by the decreased purchasing

power of money in the post-war period.

Women Teachers

The Government was not prepared to provide established status for women teachers. They were paid less than the men and suffered certain disabilities in their conditions of work. They held similar qualifications as the men and were subject to the same departmental regulations. However the lower scale was "in accordance with the precedent set by the Burnham Committee" in England.²⁶ The women teachers performed extra-mural duties as the men and the discrimination against married women being on the permanent establishment was based on "prejudice". And "unlike their counterparts in the United Kingdom, they are not burdened with household duties and give as much to their profession as married men".²⁷ In the States and Settlements, women teachers would not be "free" to move on transfer like the men and their "lack of continuity and mobility" was deemed a reason for the discrimination.²⁸ But the real reason was economic. As a slump measure women teachers employed after June, 1928 were told that they would be placed on a temporary basis on marriage; they were denied pension and provident fund benefits "not to mention the uncertainty of being dispensed with at the whims and fancies of every inspector of schools without any opportunity of seeking redress to which permanent teachers are entitled".²⁹ The 1928 ruling deterred young women from entering the teaching service. They would leave the service on marriage because of the severe handicaps of the lack of established status; and this no doubt resulted in a loss of experienced teachers.

The S.T.U. in making out a case for married women teachers cited the 1944 Education Act "which makes illegal the practice previously

common among some employing bodies of regarding marriage as disqualifying a woman teacher from employment on the regular staff". The colonial territories had of course their own criteria of legality and standards and the "democratic" ideas that became part of the language of struggle for teachers' rights only served to stiffen colonial resistance to change.

There was no uniform policy with regard to certain working conditions of women teachers.³⁰ Women teachers in Perak and Johore had to apply for permission to continue as teachers when they reached 45; it was not necessary for men teachers to do that. Some States and Settlements granted maternity leave but other States and Settlements insisted upon classifying such maternity leave as "medical leave".

British Military Administration (B.M.A.)

On the arrival of the British Military Administration in September, 1945, only two European Education Officers were available for educational work. The Civil Affairs Officers were instructed to open schools without delay under local supervision. The parents and children of Malaya owe a very great debt to the Locally Recruited Staff and to the Missionary Staff of the Catholic Teaching orders for their enthusiastic and unselfish work in the early days of the liberation. In spite of ill-health, malnutrition, and lack of all kinds of furniture and equipment, these teachers rapidly re-opened the schools. As one Inspecting Officer put it, 'by remarkable devotion, marked ingenuity, and strenuous teaching the local staffs got the schools working without delay'.

H. R. Chesseman.³¹

As soon as Singapore was re-occupied, the B.M.A. directed the early establishment of schools. There were only 2 Education Officers who came with the B.M.A. The experienced teachers among the locally recruited teachers - 3 of them held administrative posts and 5 became headmasters in secondary schools during the B.M.A. period - helped to bring about a smooth and rapid re-organisation of the schools and the Department of Education in the colony but all the locally recruited

teachers who held key positions during the difficult period of rehabilitation were promptly demoted to assume their teaching duties in the schools in keeping with their pre-war status in April, 1946 when the civil administration took over. There was official acknowledgement of the part played by the local staff but none of them merited any promotion.

There was an overwhelming demand for enrolment in primary (Primary I, II, Standard I) and elementary classes (Standards II-V) and many of the applicants were several years older than the normal ages for admission. Comparatively few pupils sought admission to secondary schools as the pre-war pupils in many cases found employment. School buildings were either in need of repair or occupied by the military forces and the lack of furniture, equipment, books was a factor that teachers had to contend with. Classrooms were overcrowded. But teachers helped in schemes of food and cloth distribution.

Despite the physical and mental strain and the inevitable weakening caused by years of Japanese Oppression, the local teachers co-operated wholeheartedly to re-open schools and assist in many ways the social and educational rehabilitation of the colony. (32)

At the end of 1945,³³ 37 English schools, 66 Chinese schools and 21 Malay schools, with a total enrolment of 38,717 pupils, were re-opened. Conditions continued to be abnormal in 1946 and 1947. Schools were given a free hand in promotions and overaged pupils were grouped in special classes and given intensive work covering the syllabus for 3 terms in 2 terms. Owing to the shortage of equipment, materials, and trained teachers, General Science teaching could not be resumed in 1946. 1947 was still a year of rehabilitation. Post-war training of teachers was a matter of great urgency. In September, 1946, First Year Normal

Training (for 67 untrained teachers) was started, together with refresher classes for those teachers, about 740 of them, who did not complete their course pre-war.

But the abnormal conditions did not prevent the locally recruited teachers from reviving the Children's Orchestra with 60 members and a Combined Schools Choir of 250 voices in 1946.³⁴ And the Local Examination Syndicate, responsible for the Cambridge School Certificate Education, was happy to note "the high standard" achieved by the candidates from the Malayan Union and Singapore in the December 1946 School Certificate Examination in spite of the **adverse** conditions under which they had been working".³⁵

But what was vital to the completion of rehabilitation, in meeting the needs of **a fast** increasing young population and in the development of the Ten-year Plan was an adequate supply of trained teachers. The shortage of teachers was attributed to the increase in enrolment, the heavy losses to the teaching profession during the Japanese invasion and occupation (as many died from unascertained causes and others of enemy action),³⁶ the cessation of secondary and higher education during the Japanese Occupation and more lucrative attractions outside the teaching service.

In government and government aided English schools in the colony, there were 580 teachers at the end of 1946.³⁷ At the end of 1948, there were only 688 teachers (not counting the 397 teachers in **private** English schools).³⁸

The salary scales of all types of teachers were those in force in pre-war days; there was no improved salary scheme for teachers to meet the post-war inflation. Their salaries, like those of the other

branches of the civil service, had been insufficient even in 1941 when there were protests against their inadequacies. The cost of living, according to Pyke in June, 1946, was 385 per cent compared with the "Asian Standard" of 1938 or 351 per cent compared with that of 1941.³⁹ The cost-of-living allowance granted to the teachers did not give them any extra spending power, what with the shortage of essential foodstuffs, especially rice, and the spiralling prices and black market. There was an urgent need to revise salaries; the Malayan Teachers' Federation (M.T.F.) and the Singapore Teachers' Association (S.T.A.) sent memoranda on salary revision in early 1946 on behalf of teachers. However in the private sector, trade unions were winning increases in salaries; from December, 1945 to June 1948, "the workers were in a frame of mind conducive to strikes, rioting and general industrial unrest".⁴⁰ The issue for equitable salaries for teachers became compounded with the back pay issue by the middle of 1946; the method of payment for European internees and the non-interned Asian officers became an acrimonious issue and the whole basis of the persistent agitation on back-pay was that of racial discrimination.

There was no framework for a system of negotiations between the teachers' associations and the Education Departments before the war. Problems of salaries and conditions of work were discussed at informal meetings with the administrative heads of the Education Department but the long delays for matters to reach the level of the Director-Adviser made the solution of staff problems frustratingly slow. There was scant interest shown in teachers' working conditions and salaries in the legislative and executive councils in both Kuala Lumpur and Singapore and in the State and Settlement Councils and their executive

bodies which had even less say in salaries and working conditions of teachers. These councils and legislatures were made up of senior executive European Officials, nominated European and Asian unofficials who represented finance and commerce in the country and were generally not as interested in staff conditions and relations of the civil service as they were in the welfare of their "scheduled interests".⁴¹ However the nominated Councillors, even if they had included some teachers, would not have been very effective in bringing about changes in salaries and working conditions. The power to decide lay with the Colonial Office, the European executive officers in Malaya, including the British Adviser (in Johore) whose quasi-personal rule was unaffected by the "winds of change" after the war and least by the attempts of the teachers in their struggle to improve their professional status.

There were economic reasons that made the salary structure remain unaltered and rigid for many years before the war, although by 1941 it was not adequate to support a reasonable standard of life. According to C. Gamba the transfer of the bulk of all profits earned in Malaya overseas and the absence of an income tax system to provide extra revenue for the Governments, were at least two of the economic reasons why the Malayan civil servants found it difficult to secure improved conditions of employment.⁴²

There was a growing realisation among teachers that nothing could be achieved in terms of an improved economic and professional status by merely hoping for it. They could not hope that the Colonial Government would do what was best for the teachers. The cost of living was rising; expansion in education was rapid and there was a great need to recruit more teachers. But if the majority of teachers, the locally

recruited, were so shabbily treated, how could education be successfully expanded in the best interests of those who were being educated and the teachers? A fair deal for teachers, as suggested by the S.T.U., should be based on a unified salary scale for all qualified teachers - men or women, locally recruited or European - with the appropriate points of entry adjusted according to the length of professional training and the qualifications attained, not according to race or sex. The teachers' associations, formed in the 1920s in the various States and Settlements, were characterised by their recreational and social activities rather than by any attempts at looking after the economic and professional interests of teachers. The first attempts made in 1926 to bring all the teachers' associations together for the purpose of presenting their collective views on their terms of employment and professional matters had a short life as it was discouraged by the colonial Government. A Government-sponsored federation of teachers' associations called the Malayan Teachers' Federation (M.T.F.) was started in August 1938; it ceased to function during the Japanese occupation but was revived in 1946. This Federation did not achieve anything by way of an improved salary structure. An organisation like the M.T.F., which enjoyed official patronage was, by its constitution, not able to correct the discriminations and anomalies and reject the caste mind in education. In their own interests, teachers, be they government or aided school teachers in Malaya, would have to get together to improve their economic and professional standing. In order to be effective, they would have to form one trade union organisation of their own, in spite of such obstacles as the clauses in the service regulations like the General Orders (G.O.), Colonial Regulations and

and the Education Code, the Trade Union Ordinance, 1940 and other restrictive laws in operation. Other "difficulties" of organisation would be the attitude of hostility of the supporters, European or local, of the M.T.F. and the teachers' associations and the indifference of some teachers to the advantages of trade unionism. And this called for unselfish men with conviction and courage, men with ideas, organisational sense and commitment to the teachers' cause.

CHAPTER 3

THE FORMATION OF THE SINGAPORE TEACHERS' UNION

The Singapore Teachers' Association has no legal status to maintain or improve the social, economic and professional interests of its members. We have the men amongst us but not the necessary framework. Hence the drift and the discriminations.

P. V. Sarma.

It was not, in all instances, that expatriate officers in the Education Departments in pre-war Malaya and Singapore were responsible for the formation and continuance of the first teachers' associations. In the early 1920s, teachers' associations were organised in a few of the States in Malaya but they were mainly concerned with social activities for the members, "mainly farewell parties for senior expatriate officers going on furlough".¹ In 1926, the Malayan Teachers' Association was formed to look after the professional, social and economic interests of all teachers; it was the result of the effort of P.E. Navarednam, V.D. Kuppusamy, Lionel van Geyzel and several others but the "colonial Government did not favour the formation or strengthening of employees' organisations and consequently the Malayan Teachers' Association went out of existence in a few years..."² The teachers' associations continued to function but they failed to end the numerous 'anomalies' in the teaching profession.

In the 1939 August school vacation, the 5th Education Conference

was held at Victoria Institution, Kuala Lumpur. At the Conference, the teachers' associations of Selangor, Perak, Penang, Malacca and Singapore formed the Malayan Teachers' Federation (the M.T.F.) with H.R. Cheeseman, Director of Education, as President.³ There was now official patronage and expatriate officials guided the activities of the associations.

After the reoccupation of Malaya by the British in September, 1945, there was a growing awareness of some teachers in Singapore as having interests apart from and in antagonism to those supporting the colonial establishment. They wanted all the teachers in English schools to form an organisation based on the principles of trade unionism and were prepared to fight for their rights as teachers within the restrictive colonial framework. They were nationalists, imbued with the radical traditions of the British labour movement and saw their first task as that of educating the teachers about the urgent need of a trade union for teachers.

There were also some teachers in the Malayan states who showed interest in organising teachers in trade unions. But these "organisers met opposition from the colonial Government as well as from certain teachers who felt that teachers' trade unions were unnecessary as they 'lowered' the teacher to the level of the manual worker".⁴

The teachers' associations of Johore, Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Pahang, Selangor, Perak, Penang and Singapore were revived after the war and they became members of the resuscitated M.T.F. in early 1946. The President and the Vice-President were H.R. Cheeseman (Director of Education, Malayan Union) and A.W. Frisby (Director of Education, Singapore) respectively. 3 representatives were to be chosen from each teachers' association to form the M.T.F. Council but the Singapore

Teachers' Association (S.T.A.) opted out. It ceased sending its representatives to the M.T.F. meetings after the first meeting in 1946 because it was making preparations for establishing the Singapore Teachers' Union.

Effort was made in order to make the M.T.F. a viable organisation⁵ for teachers:

1. It presented a memorandum to the Malayan Union in 1946 on the question of general revision of teachers' salaries and also made representations to the Trusted Salaries Commission.
2. A teacher, F.G.H. Parry, was appointed a member of the Perak Advisory Council in 1946, the first time in Malaya that a school teacher was ever given the honour; and through the effort of the M.T.F., another teacher, Chang Min Tat, the Penang Representative to the M.T.F. Council of Representatives, was invited to serve on the Finance Fact-Finding Committee of the Malayan Union.
3. In October, 1947, the M.T.F. published the first of the new series of the Journal of the M.T.F., called The Malayan Teacher, under the editorship of a locally recruited teacher, S.V.J. Ponniah.

But whatever the achievements made by the M.T.F., there were no improvements in salaries and conditions of work. The salary structure had remained rigid for many years and by 1941, it was completely inadequate to meet economic and social needs. The post-war inflation gave the stagnating teachers' salaries a diminishing value as they lagged behind a rapidly rising cost of living.

But the occupation period of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years brought about changes in thinking and ideas. Pre-war practice and attitudes were not to be tolerated. The S.T.A. started with the coming together of a few teachers under official patronage, at a time when the Normal trained teachers began to make their appearance in great number. Some joined because they were interested in "mutual" improvement of some sort; some were interested in stimulating increased exertions in literary and dramatic

activities. Representations were made to the Education Departments after they had made a declaration that the Association members would "serve the Government most loyally". The long delays while they waited for decisions by the Director of Education added to their difficulties; many of them were disillusioned and frustrated. But more often than not, the prominent officials of the association sought and were given favours while talking over cups of tea and there was a breed of teachers who strove to become "Government" men and thus to merit promotion.

Other than the annual tea-party, the journal, known as the Chorus, constituted almost the whole of the programme of activities of the pre-war S.T.A. In 1941, the Chorus became the journal of the M.T.F. when the journal incorporated the oldest teachers' journal in Malaya, Progress, the organ of the Johore Teachers' Association.⁶ In the Chorus, there was a studied avoidance of politics and 'controversial' topics and of anything that calculated to bring the colonial establishment into disrepute. So subjects like "education" were written about but professional interests or questions of wages and working conditions were neglected. The magazine had the effect of sidetracking the teachers from the real interests of the profession.

In 1946, when the S.T.A. was revived, it threw in its lot with the Junior Civil Service Council (J.C.S.C.) in its claim for back pay to Asian civil servants from the British Military Administration (B.M.A.). No such action was taken by the teachers' associations in Malaya. The S.T.A. which had stopped sending its representatives to the M.T.F. Council meetings was interested in bringing together all teachers in English schools in a trade union organisation, aimed at determining wages and conditions of service by negotiation with the employers.

There were difficulties and the most important was that the employers could force teachers to abjure trade unionism.

Arising from the varied differences in experience and approach to the activities of the teachers' associations in the States and Settlements, different attitudes were struck by each of the teachers' unions in their dealings with the Education Departments after the war. The Teachers' Association of Malacca, on the day of its dissolution, praised in glowing terms the work done by its patron, C.P. Purcell (the Senior Inspector of Schools) and its president, A. Godman (an Education Officer) for the success of the Music and the Dramatic Sections of the association and for their part in "encouraging and awakening local teachers to an interest in cultural activities".⁷ These were activities the S.T.U. would organise and lead itself as it had among its members teachers capable of devoting their leisure hours in order to bring about a greater appreciation of culture. The "unnecessary" dependence on expatriate officers for anything was not part of the new consciousness and the new-found confidence that some Singapore teachers felt after the war.

When the Teachers' Union of Malacca (T.U.M.) was formed on the 3rd October, 1947, it informed the Director of Education, Malayan Union of its changed status and assured him of its co-operation with the Education Department thus:-

The cordial relations between the Education Department and the teachers in Malacca will be maintained and in the interests of education, we assure you that we shall wholeheartedly cooperate with the Department. We trust that our services will be utilised for the benefit of the public whom we serve. (8)

This offer of co-operation, to the S.T.U., smacked either of hypocrisy or sycophancy and was uncomfortably reminiscent of the days

of the teachers' associations. There could not be any real co-operation when the locally recruited teachers were so blatantly discriminated against in terms of salaries and conditions of work; as teachers they were regarded as inferior to the rawest European recruit. Co-operation with the Department under such circumstances could not mean anything at all. The question of the proper "approach" to adopt with regard to the European officials was a matter of controversy in the early days of the Malayan Teachers' Union. Below is an extract from the minutes of the Executive Council meeting of the M.T.U. in December, 1947;⁹ it exemplifies the different approaches which the teachers' unions held as "correct" although no firm decision was taken at that meeting.

- Teachers' Union of Malacca
and Union of Selangor Teachers: We could be friendly but be careful of our words.
- Pahang Union of Teachers: Never friendly but official. It's hypocritical to say that there can be any friendly approaches as the Department has been none too friendly with us.
- Negri Sembilan Teachers' Union: The friendly approach is good. Official approach is our last resort.
- Singapore Teachers' Union: No friendly approach but everything to be official. Friendly approaches have been our downfall in the past.
- Editor: If unofficial or friendly approaches are made, official confirmation in writing should follow. There should always be two or more delegates present so that our interests may be safeguarded.

The Trade Union Ordinance was passed in 1940 but it was only implemented in 1946. The S.T.A. could not have, among its objects,

the function to regulate relations between the members and their employers, the government and aided school authorities, because it was not a trade union and could not, legally, have the same functions as a trade union on matters affecting salaries and conditions of employment of its members. However it helped the movement towards greater unity of teachers by its willingness to sponsor a meeting of teachers in English schools in Singapore. It was realised that the S.T.A. was an effete organisation and the teachers were disillusioned by its idea of "mutual" improvement. They wanted the opportunity of improving their salaries and bettering their position; they also realised that as a class of people whose duties and personal interests were often interfered with by legislation, they had to unite to influence such legislation and to bring pressure to bear on the colonial establishment and the aided school authorities.

The first moves to form a union under the Trade Union Ordinance 1940 came from two aided school teachers, P.V. Sarma and Yapp Thean Chye, and a young, promising lawyer, John Eber. Yapp was completely disillusioned with the S.T.A. of which he was Secretary. Sarma and Eber were radicals in post-war Singapore where the political mood was aggressively anti-colonial and the political situation was rapidly changing and unstable. They fully realised that the disciplinary measures in the service regulations or General Orders and the restrictive framework of colonial laws could always be used in a trade union dispute; suspension, dismissal, interdiction, demotion and the detention without trial of teachers involved in trade union activities were legal weapons, which could be strictly applied. They militated against free association, redress of grievances and an independent trade

union movement of teachers in the Malay Peninsula and Singapore. What was needed by the teachers was not just a strong and vigorous leadership but a policy based on generally accepted principles in order to bring about a union of teachers, graduate and non-graduate, to cast away the pre-war attitude of submission and compliance to colonial policies and dispel the fear of the omnipotent colonial establishment. The social theorising was admirably done by the S.T.U. and the strong leadership needed was provided by the early leaders of the S.T.U. They were more trade-union minded and left-wing than their Malayan counterparts and were unafraid to take a lesson from the labour unions which were successful in their claims for increases in salaries and better conditions of work.

On the 28th September, 1946, at the convening meeting, under the auspices of the S.T.A., the 3 prime-movers of the S.T.U., P.V. Sarma, Yapp Thean Chye and John Eber, spoke to a "gathering of more than 200 strong",¹⁰ made up of teachers from both government and government aided schools. They were qualified teachers who had lived through the Japanese occupation; they were mature people who formed a big part of the intelligentsia that was alive to the role it had to play in creating a more democratic Malaya.

After the formalities, Frank James, Chairman of the day, called upon Sarma to speak on the resolution that he had circulated:

I move that we, the teachers assembled here, take the necessary steps to form ourselves into the Singapore Teachers' Union. (11)

Sarma traced in detail the history and the achievements of the British trade union movement and laid particular stress on the origin and development of the National Union of Teachers of England and Wales.

The immediate necessity of a trade union for all the government and aided school teachers was emphasised. Referring to the N.U.T., he asked:

Is it too early now to begin an organisation which had its beginning 76 years ago in England? (12)

He then dealt with the question of discrimination, the lack of job satisfaction and promotion prospects in the education service. On the vexed question of discrimination, he said:

We are assembled here as a class of teachers, not merely as government school teachers and grant-in-aid teachers, men teachers and women teachers, married and unmarried women teachers - and as a class of teachers we have found the present conditions unsatisfactory. The division of teachers into various sections has brought about various discriminations and therefore disunity among us.

Of these discriminations the first two are inter-related, that between married and unmarried women and between men and women. Women are made to feel inferior to men and married women are subject to the worst form of enslavement in our society. For when a woman teacher gets married she is penalised in her service to the community. She is reverted to the initial salary of \$100 per mensem and employed on a temporary basis with no hope of promotion or security. Such a state of affairs should not be allowed to continue.

Then there is the discrimination between government school teachers and grant-in-aid teachers. It is quite accidental that many of us are employed in grant-in-aid schools. Government insists on equal qualifications for employment in schools of both categories but then grant-in-aid school teachers suffer the disadvantage of being subject to both the aided school and government school restrictions.

Then there is the discrimination between trained teachers and graduate teachers, between the graduates themselves of the local college and between them and those of other Asiatic countries and between both these and the graduates of British universities. We are told that for promotions in the service we should hold British University qualifications for which we haven't enough facilities. Two of our men who have wasted an enormous amount of time and money have been put on the 'special' service.

But it is not a matter of qualifications - it is that vast discrimination that exists between Asiatics and Europeans. For three of our local men who have been ably holding administrative posts in the Education Department since the

re-occupation have been demoted to the teaching staff of the local schools in keeping with the pre-war set-up. Five of our head-masters have suffered a similar fate.

Our Asiatic teachers some of whom I know to be excellent in their jobs and who reached the ~~maximum~~ after 17 years of their professional career have to mark time for 8, 12 and 13 years without any hope of promotion. There is a meagre 5% superscale appointments not worth commenting upon. What incentive is there for work? But we are told that the teaching profession cannot adequately reward its members. Have we no rights in our jobs? We as teachers feel that we should have the responsibility in shaping educational policy and practice in our country. (13)

Yapp in seconding the proposal said that it was absolutely essential for teachers as a whole to form ourselves into a trade union if they wished to achieve their economic, professional and social aims. The S.T.A., he went on, notwithstanding the good work it had done since its resuscitation, was not in a position to carry out such aims. It had no legal status to give it the necessary bargaining power; it could only seek to redress grievances by presenting petitions which were merely asking for favours. Petitions, as they all knew from bitter experience, had never been granted in toto.

A few crumbs are cast down from time to time to keep down the growls.

The S.T.A. had failed to end the various anomalies and discriminations in the teaching profession. Yapp continued:

For instance, the rawest recruit from England could receive a salary which only some of the best and most experienced of the local teachers were sometimes thought fit to receive. All these had resulted in apathy towards the Association.

For one year the teachers have been waiting for certain questions of the hour to be settled but nothing other than a stray mouse has resulted from all this apparent travail. The question of back pay, the revision of salary schemes, the granting of allowances to cope with abnormal times and the over-present dissatisfaction of aided school teachers cannot be held under consideration indefinitely. To take the latest instance: the payment of two months' arrears of salary for February and March 1942 to aided school teachers which ought to have been paid two

years ago is still under consideration, although several reminders have been sent. (14)

John Eber said that it was a mistake for teachers to consider a trade union below their dignity. He pointed out:

It is a duty we owe to ourselves and our children that teachers must be content. If teachers are not adequately paid, the teaching profession will not attract the best men and women to join it. Attraction for the outstanding youths to join the profession is necessary and the attraction can only be secured if the teachers are assured of a proper livelihood and standing in society. (15)

A lively discussion followed. There was a meeting of minds at this meeting as the overriding aim was to form a trade union for teachers. All the controversial issues that cropped up at the inaugural meeting on the 14th October, 1946 were not aired. There was just a mention in passing about the General Orders curbing activities of Government unions - they were weapons, as a teacher¹⁶ described them, that the colonial establishment could use to the detriment of the teachers' cause; this question was dismissed by both John Eber and Sarma who both argued that the G.O. would become superfluous for once the teachers established a trade union then it was governed by trade union laws only and the G.O. would become a dead letter. The misgivings which the teachers still had about the threat posed by the G.O. were submerged as the most important issue was to take the necessary steps to form themselves into a trade union.

When Sarma's proposal was put to the vote, it was unanimously carried. Two European teachers, who attended the meeting, refrained from voting.

Goh Cheng Yeow of St. Anthony's School then proposed that Sarma and Yapp be made convenors to form an Interim Committee to take the necessary steps towards organising the Singapore Teachers' Union.

R. Eber of St. Anthony's School seconded it. The proposal was carried, there being no opposition.

The move on the part of the leaders of the S.T.A. to dissolve their association after the teachers had agreed to the organisation of all teachers in a trade union ended one phase of the history of the English teachers and saw the beginning of trade unionism among teachers. The dissolution of the Malay Teachers' Association and the other teachers' associations in the States and Settlements of Malaya followed in rapid succession in the next few years to give way to trade unions of teachers.

Inaugural Meeting

At the inaugural meeting¹⁷ of the S.T.U. at No. 331 North Bridge Road on the 19th October, 1946, Sarma, Secretary of the Interim Committee, made a detailed report.

9 other members were co-opted into the Committee.¹⁸ Lists of teachers willing to subscribe to the idea of a teachers' union were collected from various schools and changes to the draft constitution regarding membership, provision of financial assistance and subscription rates were made. There was a legal requirement under Section 25(ii)¹⁹ of the Trade Union Ordinance, 1940; Government servants had to obtain the permission of the Governor-in-Council to join a trade union before any registration could be effected. It was at this juncture that John Eber was appointed to act as legal adviser to the Union.

The major problem that faced members of the Interim Committee concerned the status of the aided school teachers. The Education Code was definite about aided school teachers being ineligible for housing and medical facilities and about them having the required qualifications for entry to the teaching service but it was vague about their status. The stand taken by the Interim Committee was that all teachers for whom

the S.T.U. was being inaugurated would be sufficiently covered by the phrase "persons employed by or under the Government" in Supplement 154 in the Gazette Notification which reads as follows:

Provided that such Government Officers or servants are restricted to joining or being a member of a union whose membership is confined to persons employed by or under the Government, with the exception that in government employment with the prior approval of the Colonial Secretary, may join a union not so restricted as aforesaid. (20)

The Trade Union Adviser (T.U.A.) Singapore was sympathetic and the case of the N.U.T. of England and Wales was cited as the N.U.T. was an organisation of teachers from the different types of schools that were in receipt of public funds. The S.T.U. leaders saw that a single teachers' union was necessary in order to bring together all the teachers in the government and the aided schools to achieve their aims. The legal question had to be resolved and while it remained unresolved, it caused great unhappiness. It took 6 months after the inaugural meeting for the question to be resolved. This problem had also to be faced by the teachers' unions in the Malay Peninsula.

The T.U.A. prepared a fresh copy of the constitution with certain amendments and additions. The final draft of the proposed constitution was made by reconsidering the amendments put in by the T.U.A. and by rewording some of the points in order to make it legally "as watertight as possible". Sarma and Eber were the main architects of the constitution, which later served as a model for all the teachers' unions in the States and Settlements of Malaya.

Discussion followed after Sarma's detailed report.

Ambiavagar, the former editor of The Chorus, stood for a trade union for teachers but vehemently opposed any rule in the proposed constitution that had any "political" or racial implication; a non-

political trade union of teachers would be officially approved. There were however some teachers at the meeting who were active in the M.D.U. and the "colonial" views of Ambiavagar were not acceptable. The mood in the post-war period was fiercely anti-colonial and the teachers' union could not help but reflect this mood. The impression Ambiavagar gave when he spoke was that of a person who was at once extremely cautious and inspired not by motives of self-advancement but self-improvement. Teachers' motives should be higher than that of self-advancement. He was later to lead the secessionist Graduate Teachers' Association, which disavowed the principles of the unified education service, in its fight for equitable salaries and equality of status with the expatriate officers of the Colonial Education Service (C.E.S.)

He was disturbed to learn that the model of a draft constitution of a professional association like the National Union of Teachers of England and Wales was not used. Sarma in reply said that all trade unions were governed by the same laws and as far as the legal framework was concerned, there would be little or no difference between the various trade unions. Professional bodies might have certain special objects included but their legal constitution should be no different from the constitutions of the various trade unions.²¹

As anticipated by Yapp, the chairman of the meeting, there were many rules that required more than mere assent because they were controversial and touched on questions pertaining to politics, General Orders, racial discrimination and, what was not so obvious at that time, the personal aspirations of the graduate teachers. At Yapp's suggestion, Sarma, as one of the prime-movers of the S.T.U., was asked to speak on the many issues that might be brought up at the meeting. Sarma spoke²²

but he was interrupted by Vaithinathan who asked the chairman whether what Sarma said was relevant. Vaithinathan showed impatience with Sarma's class analysis and views on the divergent forces present in the teaching service. The discussions that followed were lengthy and sometimes bitter. Attitudes were struck. The radicals won the day. The issues discussed are still relevant today, in a different form, and I shall try and capture the atmosphere and spirit of the discussion of the issues and the postures struck by quotations of the actual words spoken.

Rule 1 (c) was an indirect political issue. It concerned the address of the registered office. The Interim Committee put down 2 alternative addresses: No. 4 Buyong Road or No. 331 North Bridge Road. The former address was that of the Stamford Club but since the S.T.U. constitution was printed, the club had then ceased to function and No. 331 North Bridge Road could be used as the registered office of the S.T.U. There were speakers who spoke in favour of using No. 331 North Bridge Road as a temporary office for the S.T.U. until it got a better place, although it was also the registered office of the M.D.U.

Ambiavagar opposed the move to have the registered office of the S.T.U. in the same office as that of the M.D.U. as this would bring about "our being politically influenced in our professional activities".

Ambiavagar: I think we all remember that there are regulations regarding Government servants or semi-government servants dabbling in politics. And this we know is a political organisation's office. The use of this building, as far as we can, should be limited, otherwise we may unnecessarily cause a vague suspicion of our being politically influenced in our professional activities and in view of that I think we should try our very best to get other premises as quickly as possible. While being grateful to the M.D.U. for the use of the hall and for the possible use of office accommodation, I think we have

to restrict ourselves as much as possible to create no unnecessary suspicion of our own activities. I was warned regarding any political activity or any suspicion of politics creeping into our organisation and that warning was given in the nature of a threat. Since regulations are against us, we should be chary of them. (23)

After some discussion, the chairman said there were 2 proposals before the House - "(i) that we use 331 North Bridge Road as our temporary office until we can get another office; (ii) that we use the house or address of the secretary who will be elected afterwards as our registered office address".

But the whole question was deferred until after the election.

What came up for heated discussion was the question of aims. Mr. Ambiavagar was the first to speak. He thought that the constitution had been drawn up in a hurry and not sufficient consideration had been given to the fact that they were a professional body and the objects, as they stood, did not give sufficient credit to them as a professional body.

Now we do not want to throw the focus of attention upon things that are not and should not be uppermost in our minds. Here from the appearance of things, the focus is upon mercenary things. Not that we do not want mercenary things but the focus is a little too much upon them. (24)

He rearranged the aims. What was the last of the aims in the proposed constitution, designated "General", he suggested, should be the first aim, namely:

A. Generally to promote and protect professional, educational, social and material welfare of the members in any lawful manner which the members in the Delegates' Conference or the Management Committee may from time to time deem expedient.

That gives at a glance what the general objects of the Union are. You have in the proper order all the important things we want for ourselves. (25)

He then listed the other objects²⁶ as an elaboration of what was put under "General"; in the original form, the elaboration was put down first. The amendment which Ambiavagar read out to be incorporated in the constitution as Rule 2, scrapping the original, was put to the vote. The amendment was lost by 11 votes to 60. But the discussion before the vote was taken was heated.

The debate²⁷ was one between a trade union and a professional body. To De Costa, they were necessarily separate. He said:

As it is drafted, the objects simply reproduce trade unionism, with the emphasis on trade and therefore mercenary.

He said he strongly supported the amendment as suggested by Ambiavagar.

Seow Cheng Fong spoke against the amendment thus:

... as teachers we are not grasping. We do not want to be grasping and this Teachers' Union is formed specifically for the purpose of making sure that teachers are not unduly grasping, that teachers play their correct role in the community and get their just deserts from the community, and no more ... Reshuffling of the constitution won't make things different if there is anything there that should not be. As for political activities, it is something unusual that we should straightaway declare ourselves absolutely non-political from the very beginning because I believe that the word 'politics' has got to be clearly defined by us in the constitution if we are going to declare ourselves as a non-political body. Why indulge in all that? We have submitted, I believe, our constitution and rules to the T.U.A. If he saw anything contrary to the wishes of the Government or the people of Malaya, I daresay the T.U.A. would have put his foot down.

Sarna felt that it was his duty to explain the drafting of the objects as he was largely responsible for drawing up the constitution.

He said:

They (objects) conform to the classic idea of trade union organisation. First the general objects. The general objects of the trade union are chiefly for social and economic protection of the wage earners for whose benefit it is formed. Then in regard to the remarks made about having to promote nursery, kindergarten and post-school education, I ask: Are they not incorporated within Rule 2(d)? We require a greater number of

school teachers; we require more local teachers; we can put all that down. As all that is realised in the phrase, "to consider public needs and bring to the notice of education authorities suggested reforms in policy and reform and practice", I don't think we should tie ourselves down only to certain specific items.

Ambiavagar: I don't doubt that these rules conform to the requirement of the T.U.A., but the T.U.A. is not a teacher; he is not a professional man and therefore he only looks to the legal necessities of the thing and is no more interested in it beyond that. If Mr. Garret (T.U.A.) has passed it, it does not follow that it is dignified enough though it may be legitimate for us. We are a teachers' body and not a workmen's and the classic idea of Trade Unionism was for labourers who laboured with their hands. We labour with our minds and I hope we have discontinued labouring with our hands!

Chairman: Mr. Ambiavagar has put forward the suggestion that our objects as stated in the draft constitution given to you are undignified, savouring too much of a labour organisation. We being teachers should not have connections with the poor labourers. We being teachers also require the injunction that we must not indulge in politics. On the other hand, several members have put forward the fact that it is the economic aspect that hits us the most now. That is why we are here to form a trade union. If we want to indulge in the 'working for glory' business, we shouldn't have come here to form a trade union.

Ambiavagar: I meant in brief that we are teachers first and wage-earners afterwards, not wage-earners first and teachers last. That was the reason for my proposed amendment.

Sarma: It is as wage-earners we are here to form a trade union.

There was not the slightest doubt that trade union objects were uppermost in the minds of the teachers who attended the inaugural meeting. The dissatisfaction with their salaries and working conditions were very real and they were concerned with clear objects for which the S.T.U. should stand. They saw the union releasing them from the sense of powerlessness which they had experienced with the S.T.A. when it came to questions about the improvement of terms of service. They had to be

realistic. The union would have the power only if there was unity of aims and its strength would be tested time and again in the pursuit of its aims. Without power the S.T.U. would not have a voice in the professional preparation of teachers and in educational policies in general. The engagement with the colonial establishment would be difficult and protracted and the unity of teachers should always be there. In view of this, the supporters of Ambiavagar's amendment were seen as misguided idealists at best. They did not seem to be able to see the problems ahead. It is most significant that the objects of the G.T.A. when it was formed were unashamedly trade union objects from Article 2 (a) to (g);²⁸ the last object of the G.T.A. was similar to that of the S.T.U. about which Ambiavagar was at pains to put as the first object.

Should membership be open only to 'locally recruited teachers'? Mr. Ambiavagar asked if that meant Europeans were specifically excluded.

The Chairman said that was the idea of the Interim Committee.

He added:

Europeans are the employing authorities. We are the people who are most affected by the various handicaps and discriminations and it was felt therefore that we shall have to exclude them from our Union. I should like the comment of the House on that. (29)

After the discussion, it was decided to delete the words, "locally recruited". The decision was carried by a majority of 49 votes to 24 and the rule was then amended to read, "ordinary membership shall be open to all teachers ...".

On the question of qualifications for holding office, Ambiavagar proposed an amendment thus:

Only ordinary members who shall have fully paid up subscriptions and who are not committee members of any political organisations may stand for election to office".

I propose that amendment because the General Orders explicitly say we may not be members of any political organisation. I have also seen a private circular to the effect that no action is to be taken against Government servants who are members of political organisations - for the time being only. But this does not mean a suspension of the G.O. which forbid Government servants from joining any political organisations. And if we are, action may be taken when and as necessary by the Government. That is a government circular, not intended for everyone to see. I accidentally saw that. It has not been circulated and therefore the G.O. stand as they are, that we may not be members of political organisations. It has not been revised as far as I know. (30)

Seow Cheng Fong said he failed to see what relevance a person's political affiliation had in their consideration of the election of office-bearers.

Seow: It is not because they are members of political organisations that we are going to elect them. but because they are in the same profession. In such matters, as a body of teachers, let us be the last to suppress others.

Ambiavagar: I see this relevance in the amendment that I propose. If we have in our committee a member who is also a member of a committee of a political organisation, if and when Government thinks it necessary to take action against him, then it will involve that committee and it may call for legal assistance and financial assistance as laid down in our constitution and therefore involving the whole organisation.

Seow: ... I do not think we should be in a hurry to object to people's political colour.

Ambiavagar: I am passing on the benefit of information, or advice, or threat, or whatever you may call it, of dabbling in politics and getting involved. We will have trouble in the future if we do not take cognizance of this.

Seow: Any action taken against an officer of the trade union will be because he has gone against the provisions of the Trade Union Ordinance, not because he has gone against anything else and we as members of the trade union must pick and choose men according to our constitution and rules.

A speaker (unnamed) accused Arbiavagar of imposing a 'blackout' on the freedom and choice of teachers and "while we are struggling for a democratic Malaya to impose an iron curtain on the minds of the people. Because a man joins a certain party, he is debarred from holding office as a committee member (of S.T.U.) ...".

Arbiavagar: I'm not proposing an iron curtain against political conscience but Government has put the curtain up and it says clearly that no Government servants may get elected as a representative of the people. There is already an iron curtain there.

Sarma: But the very idea of the Union is to remove the iron curtain. Why, we should put it down again.

Seow: Our speaker before the last has raised a point which he absolutely misunderstands - the Government refuses Government servants the opportunity of representing the people of Malaya. But the Government has not refused Government servants the opportunity to vote. Therefore I say that while Government is ready for certain reasons to debar teachers and Government servants from getting elected, directly to represent the people of Malaya, Government has not made it clear to me at least that Government refuses to allow teachers or Government servants to join organisations or get the vote.

Arbiavagar: We are forming this Union while the G.O. are still in existence. We shall have to take cognizance. If we do not, they will. I propose the amendment that "only ordinary members, who shall have full paid up subscriptions and contributions owing to the Union and who are not committee members of any political organisation may stand for election to office".

The amendment was defeated by 15 votes to 37.

H. N. Balhetchet was elected the first President³¹ of the S.T.U. When he took the chair, he made a strong appeal for unity. A great diversity of views was expressed and anti-colonial views in strong terms were overwhelmingly accepted. But the immediate need, according to Balhetchet, was to sink all differences and unite as a body of teachers, not as government servants, aided school teachers, graduates

and Normal trained teachers.

We should sink our differences and come together as a general body of teachers. If we can do this, I feel confident that we shall be able to overcome numerous obstacles that I foresee ahead of the Union. Obstacles not only with regard to misunderstandings with the authorities, misunderstandings among ourselves but obstacles of discrimination, colour bar and so on ... (applause). (32)

The S.T.U. President was a well-respected Inspector of Schools. He had a serious turn of mind and was not altogether unaffected by the radical ideas that gained currency after the war. He was not given to noisy arguments and while he was President, he was the moderating influence and the responsible head of the S.T.U. He was with the S.T.U. for all it stood because to him the S.T.U. cause was the right one and he did not leave it, as did almost all the early graduate members of the S.T.U., to join the Graduate Teachers' Association in September, 1951.

The classroom situation somehow seemed to linger on when he spoke, for the first time as President, to the teachers, exhorting them on the necessity of electing a strong committee.

... So just bear in mind. Elect members who are willing to do work because there is hard work in front of us. If you elect members of the committee who simply hold office for the mere name of the office, then I'm afraid our committee will not do much for you. (33)

The two "burning questions" that were foremost in his mind were (1) married women teachers who were discriminated against and (2) a revision of salary schemes which would concern every teacher. He added that if the Management Committee members could feel their way at the beginning, deal with first things first, then as the S.T.U. gathered strength, they could get on to the numerous anomalies that existed in the teaching service.

At the Extraordinary General Meeting on the 4th February, 1947, Balhetchet directed members' attention to the unofficial information he had received that most of the recommendations made by the S.T.U. with regard to the anomalies in the position of married women teachers³⁴ had been accepted by the Governor. Before the meeting ended, Balhetchet informed the members about the progress made to register the S.T.U. Registration papers were submitted on the 1st November, 1946, to the T.U.A. Because of the delay in the reply, Sarma interviewed the T.U.A. who assured him that the teachers in the S.T.U. could take it for granted that the registration of the S.T.U. was provisionally accepted. It was only on the 28th January, 1947, that the Registrar sent a letter to the Union suggesting revision of the Rules 2(a) and 3(a) on membership³⁵ of the Union. There was, it appeared, a conflict of legal opinion on the question of aided school teachers being members of the S.T.U. Sarma wrote to the N.U.T. for advice and assistance, obtained legal assistance and enlisted the support of the T.U.A. The Management Committee was determined to take all measures in order to thrash out the question.

This led to a lot of confusion. One of the members asked at the meeting thus:

In the light of all this, are we a Union or not?³⁶

Balhetchet replied:

We will be a union until we are told to cease. The matter is under negotiation. We are not accepting the decision and all necessary steps are being taken, failing which the matter will be referred to the House. (37)

At the General Meeting held on the 17th April, 1947, Balhetchet told the teachers present that the S.T.U. had just been registered. He asked all members to give their loyal support and take a more active

part in it. The S.T.U. was open to all teachers in English schools,
government and aided.

CHAPTER 4

THE FIRST YEAR

The first year of the S.T.U. was marked by an outburst of immense intellectual energy and great expectations; the hitherto undiscovered organisational talents of the teachers were engaged in activity that had scope, challenge and a future. The dominating impulse was the ideal of nationalism - freedom from alien rule - and the supplanting of the colonial system and all it stood for with a system based on the social and political ideals of the West. It was as the prophet of trade unionism of the English educated that the S.T.U. found its role. It was the first trade union of government employees to be established and it was responsible for the growth of trade union consciousness among the government employees in Singapore; it was associated with other unions and associations of government employees on specific trade union issues as leaders. Before the S.T.U. was formed, there were teachers who had been active in the M.D.U. and prominent in the back pay issue. The S.T.U. was responsible for the formation of trade unions for teachers in the various States and Settlements in the Malayan Union and its effort at the end of the first year of its existence culminated in the establishment of the Malayan Teachers' Union. It thought out and defined the basic problems of education and offered solutions. The strategy and campaign it worked out for furthering the cause of teachers

as a whole and the persistence with which it strove to achieve its aims in the first few years were born out of the great conviction of the justice of its cause. Its principal thinker and organiser was Sarma and up to 1950 internal dissensions were minimal and the Management Committee was filled with strong and stable executives. Among them were such stalwarts like Balkhetchet, Scharonguiwet, Saw Chang Fong and Devan Nair.

Back Pay

This was an issue which concerned all grades of government employees. It caused ill-will between the locally recruited employees and the European officers. On the 14th September, 1945, the Controller of Finance and Accounts, B.M.A., Singapore, decided to pay the locally employed personnel in government service and government pensioners 3 months' salary or pension, subject to a maximum of \$250 for the period under Japanese occupation (from 15th February, 1942 to 4th September, 1945). European civil servants who were interned were paid full retrospective salaries in pounds sterling for the whole period and their salaries were paid out of Malayan funds, not funds from the United Kingdom.¹ There was strong public criticism. The Junior Civil Service Association (J.C.S.A.) was in the fore, making representations on behalf of the locally recruited as there were no trade unions of government employees in existence then. The J.C.S.A. in Singapore and in the Malayan Union sent petitions and cables requesting the payment of 3½ years of arrears to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.² The replies were unfavourable. The J.C.S.A. in Singapore then sought to enlarge its representation of government employees by inviting associations and clubs of government employees in order to form a

Combined Committee to make representations to the colonial government on the question of back pay.³ The S.T.A. had its representative on the Combined Committee which was formed on the 2nd May, 1946. At a meeting in October, 1946, the Combined Committee decided to demand payment of arrears for $3\frac{1}{2}$ years as it was not interested in any compromise that the Colonial Secretary in Singapore was trying to work out. The reply to that demand was addressed to the Chairman of the J.C.S.A. Without consulting the Combined Committee, the Chairman and 2 other members of the J.C.S.A. had a meeting with the Colonial Secretary. After the meeting, the Chairman of the J.C.S.A. held an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association and passed a resolution asking for $2\frac{1}{2}$ months' back pay.⁴ This compromise was unacceptable to members of the Combined Committee. Balhetchet, a representative of the S.T.A. on the Combined Committee, purporting to represent the general body of government employees, agitated for a meeting with the Colonial Secretary but failed. The Colonial Secretary refused to recognise any body except the J.C.S.A. Through the efforts of Balhetchet, a meeting of various members of other associations of government employees was organised and a working relationship was established. The S.T.U. was established in October, 1946. The J.C.S.A. was still the recognised body as far as the Colonial Secretary was concerned. On the 20th January, 1947, the Combined Committee, with the new Chairman of the J.C.S.A. concurring, dissociated itself from the past action of the J.C.S.A. and also from the resolution asking for 24 months' back pay. The new Chairman of the J.C.S.A. met the Financial Secretary of Singapore on the 28th January, 1947; the Financial Secretary had evolved a sliding scale⁵ according to which those drawing \$100 or less per month would receive 6 months'

back pay; those drawing between \$100 to \$200 per month would receive 10 months' back pay; and those receiving \$300 and above per month would receive 14 months' back pay. The Chairman of the J.C.S.A. did not accept the offer.

There was no official agreement between the Financial Secretary of the Malayan Union and his counterpart in Singapore as to the suitable sum to be paid out to the government employees and the \$250 (maximum) which the B.M.A., Singapore, had promised the government employees 10 months ago was not paid yet.

Post-war inflation meant that the salaries of teachers and other wage earners in Government service were diminishing in value as rapidly as the cost of living was rising. The Pyke allowances⁶ were too meagre to be of any help. The conservative Straits Times in an editorial on the back pay issue said:

The blunder resulted in the first place from the stupid, unimaginative and selfish spirit in which the Colonial Office envisaged the problem of the internees. We'll look after our own and the others can go to the devil - that was their attitude. (7)

There were unfavourable criticisms levelled at the B.M.A. and "its prestige and reputation had suffered by comparisons - however valid - with the Japanese administration, particularly in its handling of the distribution of food".⁸ Corruption too was found in European circles. Strikes of the industrial workers were frequent and estate workers and employees of business houses were becoming "marginal strikers".⁹ Asian members of the Volunteer Forces and the members of the Dalforce who fought the Japanese in the jungle were discriminated against. But the claim of the European tin miners for War Damage payments were met in full. And in the meantime there was discontent and unrest in the civil service.

The civil servants explained that since the end of the war their duties had become more exacting and demanding; the physical strain was beyond the strength of many who had not yet recovered from the effects of the Occupation. The European personnel had been granted leave; the Asian staff, just as tired and worn out, were now carrying on with a double load of work. Pre-war standards of behaviour were once again expected of people whose outlook had completely changed. The Japanese face-slapping had ceased but the pre-war servility of junior to senior, of Asian to European, even if to a lesser degree, was reintroduced together with the difficulties raised against the promotions to higher appointments. (10)

Balhetchet had realised the inadequacy of the J.C.S.A. in its representation of all government employees. At the office of the S.T.U., a meeting of representatives of associations and trade unions of government employees was held on the 16th February, 1947; the purpose was to discuss the conduct of negotiations between the government employees and the Colonial Government. The meeting decided that the J.C.S.A. was not a representative body to conduct negotiations with the Colonial Government on the claim of back pay and recommended that a representative committee of employees of all government departments be formed to deal with the question of back pay. On the 20th February, 1947, the Government Servants' Back Pay Council (G.S.B.P.C.) was formed and the S.T.U. was its Secretary. Sarma, the General Secretary of the S.T.U. was also the Secretary of the G.S.B.P.C. The J.C.S.A. joined forces with the Council.

On the 14th February, 1947, the Colonial Secretary wrote to the President of the J.C.S.A. about the offer of ex gratia payments which would be given to non-interned government employees in respect of the period under Japanese occupation. This offer was made by the Finance Committee of the Singapore Advisory Council and approved by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. This was done, explained the Colonial Secretary, because all the parties concerned were unable to achieve a

generally acceptable solution and in these circumstances the Governor of Singapore "has considered it his duty to refer the matter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies who has himself on more than one occasion impressed upon the local authorities the desirability of reaching an agreed conclusion over this question and who has been kept informed of the views held on both sides and the progress of the negotiations to date",¹¹ The settlement which was contained in "Circular 24"¹² was made on the following basis: the Japanese Government deducted the salaries of government employees during the occupation at the rate of 20% on the first \$100, 40% on the second \$100 and 60% thereafter; and, including certain bonuses paid by the Japanese, the government employees would have received 44 months' salary at the reduced rate (from April, 1942 to August, 1945). The Colonial Government would make good the reduction and the difference which government employees were entitled to obtain ~~was~~ calculated at 5.8 months for those receiving less than \$100 per month, 14.6 months' salary less \$800 for those receiving between \$100 to \$200 per month, and 23.4 months' salary less \$2,640 for those receiving more than \$200 per month. It was only after the issue of Circular 24 that the S.G.S.P.B.C., which incorporated the J.C.S.A. on behalf of all the locally recruited personnel, became the recognised body. The S.G.S.B.P.C. rejected the award. On the 25th February, 1947, at an interview with the S.G.S.B.P.C., the Colonial Secretary refused to allow the first payment under Clause 11¹³ of Circular 24 to be made immediately as a relief measure pending the final decision of the back pay issue. A cable to the Secretary of State was sent through the Colonial Secretary by the S.G.S.B.P.C. rejecting Circular 24 and requesting that first payment under Clause

ll be made immediately without prejudice to any further claims that might be made by the Council on behalf of government employees. On the 12th April, 1947, the request for the first payment was granted by the Colonial Secretary.

The J.C.S.A. in the Malayan Union on the 24th April, 1947 accepted the invitation to join the S.G.S.B.P.C. in presenting a joint memorial to the Secretary of State; this was the beginning of the close cooperation that characterised the work of the numerous back pay groups in the 2 territories. On the 14th May, 1947, mass meetings of government servants were held concurrently in the 2 territories and the Memorial was read and adopted before it was forwarded to the Secretary of State. On the 18th September, 1947, the Secretary of State informed the Memorialists that "he has given the fullest consideration to the matters put forward in the memorial, that all these factors were given due weight before he approved the award now made and that he sees no reason to alter the terms of that award".¹⁴ This was a severe blow to the government employees. They protested against the terms of the back pay award contained in Circular 24. It merely perpetuated racial discrimination by the meagre awards to the locally recruited personnel as against the full back pay so "readily given to European government employees". They also protested against

the evasion of its moral responsibility by Government in its insistence on the valuation of the Japanese currency "dollar for dollar" in spite of the clear proof offered in the Petition forwarded by the J.C.S.A. (Malayan Union) and the S.G.S.B.P.C. that the average value of the dollar for the period of the Japanese occupation was under 18 cents. (15)

The President of the S.G.S.B.P.C. had made a very strong speech¹⁶ against the provisions of Circular 24. He enumerated all the various

decisions made by the Colonial Government: European government employees received without any delay the full amount of his back pay in cash whereas the back pay for Asiatic government servants was under consideration for 18 months ("Did Government during these 18 months give any thought to the sufferings of the inadequately paid Asiatic government servants most of whom suffered grievously during the Japanese occupation?"); the Pyke allowances were disappointing and the scheme announced in March, 1947 was totally inadequate ("I am voicing the sentiments of the Asiatic government servants of the Colony ..."); before the fall of Singapore the Governor issued an order to all government servants to stay at their posts and to assist in the preservation of law and order and the efficient functioning of all the public services ("I would ask you to note that the Government did not terminate the contract of service of the Asiatic government servants"); only those who were interned should receive back pay ("The fact that those who would benefit by the decision were the European government servants, it is hardly necessary to say, well known to those who made the decision"); the provision of \$750,000 was for the internees to pay toward the cost of the extra comforts they received during the period of internment ("We, the Asiatic government servants, unfortunately, had no Camp Committee to look after our finances or to give a guarantee to any person kind enough to advance a loan that he would be repaid out of the funds of the Colony"). On the liberation of Singapore, the President continued, government employees fondly imagined that racial discrimination was a thing of the past.

We began to be sadly disillusioned when the B.M.A. appeared and our disillusionment became even greater when the civil administration took over the reins of government.

With the re-introduction of civil government, many of the officials of the B.M.A. were offered permanent and semi-permanent jobs in the civil service; arrangements were made for them to be interviewed in the Colonial Office and many of them were given a 10-year contract. The relationship between the locally recruited and the European officers worsened as these contract European officers were placed over the locally recruited, many of whom were in service for a longer period.¹⁷

The meeting at which the President spoke was estimated to be attended by about 2,500,¹⁸ representing government employees in the medical, teaching, legal and clerical services. This was the first time in the history of Singapore that government employees turned up as a body to protest against the terms of the so called ex gratia payments as contained in Circular 24.

Banners were carried inscribed: 'Circular 24 is not cricket', 'Uphold democracy and justice, down with colour prejudice'. The meeting wholeheartedly supported a number of serious accusations levelled at the British Government. Neither those who spoke nor those who listened could have been labelled as subversive elements. They were loyal civil servants, respected leaders of the community, professional men highly esteemed in academic and social circles, civil servants with high seniority who for many years had been entrusted with the actual implementation of delicate policies. They were teachers, doctors, nurses, departmental heads and junior clerks. There was complete unity though some felt that it was useless to continue to fight. (19)

The leaders of the back pay movement were interested in legal means to resolve the issue. After the rejection of the Memorial on back pay by the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the S.G.S.B.P.C. wrote to John Eber requesting him to furnish an opinion on whether or not the government employees had a legal claim for back pay for the period of the Japanese occupation. He was not able to offer any considered opinion on the matter and cautioned the government servants thus:

It must be remembered that if proceedings for recovery of the difference between the amounts to be claimed and the amounts claimed were successful, Government would undoubtedly appeal to the Privy Council. If on the other hand proceedings were unsuccessful, it would be unsatisfactory if any feeling existed on the part of Government servants that every possible step had not been taken to ensure success. (20)

He then suggested that a brief be prepared in his office setting out all the facts to date and the relevant documents (Colonial Regulations and General Orders) sent to his London agents with instruction to retain 2 counsels in London to examine every aspect of the legal position for their separate opinions. This was considered a necessary and prudent step before the institution of proceedings that would involve several million dollars. If the opinions of the counsels were that the government servants had a legal claim, then legal proceedings could be instituted with every confidence. Sarma was interested in pursuing the matter to the finish. It turned out to be a protracted and fruitless affair.

The civil service unions played a very active role during the struggle for back pay and this resulted in the formation of a number of trade unions of government employees. The appointment of the salaries commission under the chairmanship of Sir Harry Trusted in April, 1947 encouraged government employees to become members of their unions. The appointment of the salaries commission had the effect of checking the mounting discontent and unrest in the civil service; it diverted attention from the back pay issue to the existing salary scales which were inadequate. There was great interest shown by the teachers in the intended revision of salaries and conditions of service and the extent to which the cost of living allowances should be incorporated into basic salaries. In their enthusiasm they saw in the salaries commission the arena in which their search and struggle for professional status

would take place - equitable salaries for teachers were bound up with the question of status and self respect which affected very deeply and in very real terms their performance and efficiency and their place in society.

Unified Education Service

As a result of a referendum taken in early April, 1947, the S.T.A. Petition on teachers' salaries and conditions of work sent to the Colonial Secretary in 1946 was withdrawn and it was replaced with the Memorandum on Unification of the Education Service and Revision of Salaries of the S.T.U. After it had been approved by the general meeting of the S.T.U. on the 14th April, 1947, it was sent to the Joint Secretary, Salaries Commission. On the 8th July, 1947, the S.T.U. representatives²¹ had a meeting with Sir Harry Trusted who commented on the comprehensive and full coverage of the Memorandum. At the meeting the S.T.U. representatives lay particular emphasis on the principles of unification of the education service with the following points - equality of status between the European teachers and the locally recruited, equality of status among all teachers, equality of status of the men and women in the profession, married and unmarried teachers and equality of status and conditions of service between government teachers and aided school teachers. Sir Harry Trusted asked the questions and said firmly that he was not there to express his views. The Commission was not specifically asked to determine salaries and conditions of service of teachers but to determine the conditions of the whole civil service "having regard to the fact that stable economic conditions have not yet been established".²² The Commission was preoccupied with the question of reducing the large number of salary

scales and incorporating cost of living allowances into the basic salaries in an abnormal situation and had to produce the Report quickly in order to divert attention from the back pay issue.

The Ten-Year Plan for education that was mooted and adopted on the 7th August, 1947 by the Singapore Advisory Council would require many more new teachers and unless suitable salaries and conditions of service were offered, the best people would not be attracted to the education service. The solution according to the S.T.U. was to have a unified education scheme for all qualified teachers; the scheme was to be based on a single "professional" basic scale, with special increments for a degree and longer training. In fixing the basic scale, the basic salary had to be fixed first for the Normal trained teacher, with additional increments in the minimum and maximum for additional qualifications. There would not be any discrimination based on race, sex, qualification or on whether a teacher was a government employee or an aided school teacher. There would then be one education service for both European and locally recruited teachers and there should be equal treatment for all qualified teachers in the English stream. The reasons²³ given by the S.T.U. for the changes which it considered necessary were as follows:

1. There was an increasing number of local teachers who were qualifying for either the Arts or Science Diplomas of Raffles College or for University degrees abroad.
2. There was no lack of local talent among local teachers to hold higher posts than they were at present eligible for. Their ability was tested and was not found wanting when local teachers acted for European officers pre-war and during the difficult period under the B.M.A.
3. The Governor-General said in a speech in March, 1947 that the process by which the Malaysians hoped to attain self-government would not cease until Malaysians controlled all

the affairs of state. He said: You will not only need Government officials but a first rate Civil Service with trained men and women to serve in administrative posts now filled by Europeans who will have to disappear.

4. Since racial discrimination in the Colonies was to cease, the salaries of European and local teachers should not show "signs of such discrimination".
5. School teachers must play an important role in the construction of the new order in Malaya and so it was necessary that the best elements among the youth of the country should be attracted to the education service by improving the prospects of the service.

In other words, the unified education service envisaged by the S.T.U. would be one open service for all teachers, including the locally trained teachers and European trained teachers, locally recruited graduates and European graduates. Europeans and the locally recruited alike could expect to fill any position in the service. The locally recruited teachers should then be transferable in various capacities from one part of the Malayan Union to another and also to the Colony of Singapore, as was practised in the case of the Europeans, in the course of their progress in the education service, from the post of Assistant Master to Headmaster, Acting Inspector of Schools, Inspector of Schools, Deputy Director of Education and finally Director of Education. The unified service would also make necessary the creation of more superscale appointments and, according to the S.T.U., superscale officers should wherever possible be appointed to administrative posts. The expatriate allowance which should be paid should not reach "figures creating a disguised inequality in salaries"; a fixed sum equal to 25% of the initial salary or an amount equal to not more than 4 annual increments was suggested as "an equitable expatriate allowance."²⁴

The S.T.U. also asked generally for parity in the conditions of service for all qualified teachers. In the case of Children's

Allowances, it asked that the allowances be paid but the rates of payment did not have to be the same as for the European families. European teachers were either provided with quarters or received a housing allowance. A small number of the locally recruited teachers was given quarters but "in contrast to the spacious quarters of Europeans, the Asiatics are provided with houses that are not adequate for the needs of the family".²⁵ However those who were not housed in Government quarters did not receive any housing allowance. In this connection, the S.T.U. asked for suitable quarters to be provided for the locally recruited and if suitable quarters were not available a housing allowance of 10% of the substantive salary be paid.

The S.T.U. then broached the question of educational leave. European officers were entitled²⁶ to the following:

1. Vacation leave on full pay may be granted to a junior officer after a tour of not less than 3 years and not more than 4 years resident service.
2. Leave on full pay may be granted to a Senior Officer with less than 20 years service after a tour of not less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ years and not more than 3 years resident service.
3. Leave on full pay may be granted to a Senior Officer with more than 20 years service after a tour of not less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ years and not more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ years resident service.

Apart from full pay during the long vacations, European officers were also provided with free return passages for themselves and their families. The S.T.U. asked for educational leave on full pay of 6 months after 4 years or 9 months after 6 years in service for all teachers, irrespective of race or domicile for purposes of study or travel.

Such leave will help local teachers to attend postgraduate or other courses overseas and equip themselves with new knowledge and new ideas which they can bring to bear upon their work. ... Free return passages are asked for and we feel that unless full

pay during vacation were provided many Asiatics will find themselves financially incapable of availing themselves of the opportunities of going abroad. (27)

Another allowance which the S.T.U. asked for was what it called an Urban Allowance on the lines of the "London Area Allowances". It was to be an allowance to be paid to teachers in Singapore in order to enable the teachers to meet the higher cost of living in the Colony than in any other part of the Malayan Union. "We believe", said the S.T.U., "that the cost of living in Singapore is as high as that ruling in the largest cities of the world".

On the question of a Promotions Board, the S.T.U. memorandum had this to say:

In the past, promotions to the superscales and to higher appointments have been arbitrary. It will be more satisfactory if a Promotions Board be set up to go properly into the question of promotions. This Promotions Board should include representatives of the Singapore Teachers' Union. (28)

The S.T.U. envisaged an independent board that would be responsible for all promotions; this would take away the function of the Secretary of State or his alter ego in the Colony of Singapore and in the Malayan Union in making all the important appointments in the civil service.

Aided School Teachers

The S.T.U. made a case for the aided school teachers to be treated as government employees; they received the same salaries but their conditions of service were poor compared to the pensions and other provisions offered to teachers in government service. The reasons²⁹ offered by the S.T.U. that the aided school teachers should be treated on identical terms as teachers in government schools were as follows:

1. Government school teachers and aided school teachers did the same work; they pursued the same ideal of training and helping the young to be in a position to realise their

capabilities. They were all a part of the colonial system of education, working the same syllabuses, and following their own extra-mural activities which were no different from that in the government schools.

Aided school teachers were mostly those who through a sense of loyalty or through their religious beliefs had allowed themselves to be drafted into the aided schools in which they were educated. They should not, according to the S.T.U., be penalised for their loyalty or for the belief that religious instruction had a place in a system of education.

2. The qualifications of aided school teachers were identical with those of government school teachers. The lay teachers of the aided schools were either graduates of Raffles College holding a postgraduate diploma in education or holders of the Normal Training Certificate and they had undergone at least 3 years of training. They held the same qualifications as government school teachers and they had always availed themselves of the post-normal courses organised by the Education Departments in the same manner as government teachers.
3. Aided school teachers were appointed with the approval of the Education Department and in the matter of qualifications and salaries, they came under the same conditions. Circulars of the Government Departments were also sent to aided schools for the information of the aided school teachers.

The point the S.T.U. made was that the Government should not think of the aided schools as a less expensive method of providing education in English. The argument that the existing relationship between the Departments and the various mission authorities would be jeopardised if the aided school teachers were placed on the same footing as the government teachers was not a relevant one as far as the S.T.U. was concerned. The relationship between the Education Department in the Colony and the various mission authorities or between the mission authorities and their teachers was a different matter altogether and should not stand in the way of granting equal conditions of service and equal opportunities to both categories of teachers.

The matter of pensions for government aided school teachers was brought to the attention of the Malayan Union Government and the

Government of the Colony of Singapore. It was realised that only when the existing gap - a pension scheme for aided school teachers - was bridged, could the dissatisfaction and the feeling of frustration among the aided school teachers be removed. Only then could there be a proper basis on which to build a unified education service, so essential, claimed the S.T.U., for the progress of the country. Comparisons were also made with the practices in other countries.

The principle that there should be no difference in the total personal emoluments and pension of government and government aided school teachers had been recognised in Britain and elsewhere - Ceylon, for example - even before the 2nd World War. Teachers in the "Dependent and Grant-in-Aid schools (formerly known as non-provided schools) in Britain enjoy the same privileges as their colleagues in the State or Government Schools. (30)

Free medical and hospital facilities had been granted to the aided school teachers in 1920 when the system of aid for mission schools was agreed to but they were withdrawn in 1922. In a later memorandum,³¹ the teachers wrote that they

... have suffered much, both mentally and financially, because they have not been accorded the same benefits as regards medical and hospital facilities and we suggest that with the granting of a Pension scheme, medical and hospital facilities similar to that granted to government employees be also granted to the employees in the government aided schools.

The aided school teachers would like very much to end "this unjust discrimination" between the government and the aided school teachers and a regulation that aided school teachers also "be entitled to receive whatever benefits and concessions government school teachers may receive from time to time" be introduced.

Education

In its proposed plan for education for the country, the S.T.U. advocated what it described as the unified system of education. The school was to be the vehicle for the building of a common Malayan

nationality. There was to be free choice of the language of instruction and pupils should not be penalised for the choice in the sense that "no matter where a pupil begins it will be possible for him if he so desires, ultimately to end in a tertiary institution, specialising in his particular branch".³² And one of the main principles underlying the proposed plan was the speedy introduction of free and compulsory education.

When the Carr-Saunders Commission on Higher Education visited Malaya in 1947 to investigate the possibility of establishing a University College, the S.T.U. was one of the few bodies that supported the view that the time was ripe for the establishment of an independent University and not a University College entering a special relationship with London University. The stand of the S.T.U. was that the Medical College and the Raffles College "have been offering courses of a university standard, without conferring degrees; in other words they have, for practical purposes, constituted a University College, though they have not been known as such".³³ The logical development would therefore be to set up a university on the basis of the 2 colleges and expand their scope to fulfil the traditional functions of a university. It would be a retrograde step to bring them together into one University College. According to Silcock, there was "considerable opposition, both official and unofficial, to the idea of a university" and it was chiefly the vigorous and determined support of the graduates of the 2 Colleges that turned the scale.³⁴ Another point that the S.T.U. stressed was the establishment of a Teachers' Training College as part of the proposed University. Speaking at a symposium,³⁵ after the publication of the Carr-Saunders Report 1948, Sarma noted that while the proposed University

would provide postgraduate training for its graduates who intended to become teachers in secondary schools, the existing system of training teachers in primary schools was most unsatisfactory. He said:

We suggest that in the absence of any regular institution for the purpose, the University Department of Education be persuaded to undertake also the training of teachers of this class. In other words, the University should also train teachers below the University level and should grant certificates or diplomas, which, we suggest, should be the minimum qualification for a teacher.

We admit that such a system would increase the duties of the University staff but this inconvenience is only temporary and is necessary to allow experience to be gained before the Teachers' Training College could be properly established. We emphasise that the development of popular education and the expansion of the educational service would be impossible without the establishment of suitable training institutions for teachers.

Sarma also suggested that when the Teachers' Training College, as envisaged in the Ten-Year Plan, was established, it should be directly under the supervision of the University and that it should be situated in its vicinity. He believed that the University would be a reliable custodian of academic standards and that the certificates issued should not be subject to the exigencies of the service; courses should not be watered down in a situation when there was a great need for teachers and thereby devaluing the certificates held by the qualified teachers; entrance qualifications should not be lowered in the event of a shortage of suitably qualified teachers. Sarma's suggestion was made with the idea of safeguarding professional standards.

It was always the contention of the S.T.U. that the qualified teachers among the locally recruited were capable of teaching the highest classes and occupying the most important posts in the education service. The Carr-Saunders Commission recommended that sixth-form teaching of pupils intending to join the University should normally be

entrusted to men and women with honours degrees but "success in it depends on temperament and attitude even more than academic attainment".³⁶ The experienced graduate teachers from Raffles College were interested in taking part in sixth-form teaching instead of leaving the task to the European teachers. Sarma reflected the views of the locally recruited when he said:

We would like to emphasise on "temperament and attitude" and are of the opinion that local teachers because of their sympathetic interest in the progress of this country are better placed to guide these school leaving students in the choice of suitable courses at the university. (37)

The Commission recommended that "much of the instruction in methods of teaching particular subjects will be best done by experienced teachers giving demonstration lessons in their own schools".³⁸ This recommendation was whole-heartedly agreed to by the S.T.U. It had offered the services of experienced locally recruited teachers to the Education Department even before the Carr-Saunders Report was out. However it deplored "the present practice of enlisting personnel for this purpose from the ranks of the Unified Colonial Service only, irrespective of their teaching experience".³⁹

Lecture courses on Economics, Civics and English Literature were arranged for the members of the S.T.U. This was the precursor of the vacation courses which the Malayan Teachers' Union and its successor the Conference of Delegates of Teachers' Unions organised later. It submitted a memorandum on Broadcasting for Schools to the Education Department and the Director of School Broadcasting appreciated the suggestions and recommendations of the S.T.U. and the prompt manner in which the S.T.U. investigated the service of his department and tackled the problems of School Broadcasting "without prejudice".

The S.T.U. was most concerned about the proper medical and dental attention which all school children should get. It criticised the existing practice of giving free treatment of any kind to children of parents whose salaries were less than \$50 per month; the figure was, to say the least, a most unrealistic and out-of-date figure. Free treatment, said the S.T.U., should be given to all children without any means test. Among other things, the S.T.U. also recommended⁴⁰ that

1. The services of a number of Dental surgeons in the city and rural areas be obtained by Government so that free attention could be given to school children.
2. The Government should approach opticians with a view to providing optical examination at reasonable fees and providing children with spectacles if they needed them.
3. Quantities of cod liver oil and vitamins A & B should be provided so that the health of children suffering from malnutrition would be improved.

Some Problems of Teachers

The first year of the S.T.U. was a very busy and in some ways a rewarding year for some of its members. It gave oral evidence before the Trusted Commission and also made representations at the Colonial Office through the National Union of Teachers of England and Wales, before the Report of the Commission was published. Support of the members of the Advisory Councils of both the Colony of Singapore and the Malayan Union was obtained. There was great hope of the Commission meeting some of the aspirations of the teachers. The first memorandum of the S.T.U. when it was first established was one that concerned married women teachers. The S.T.U. was informed that the Government of the Colony was considering a change in the service of the conditions of married women teachers. With effect from the 1st April, 1947, married women teachers were allowed to enter the salary scale of their grade at

a point determined by the number of years of trained service they had to their credit, whether this was before or after their marriage. And with effect from the 16th December, 1947, the Government of the Colony approved the grant of 56 days of vacation leave for the married women teachers for the period under the Japanese occupation on the following conditions:⁴¹

1. that they were in enemy-occupied territory during the period of the occupation.
2. that they resumed duty at the earliest possible opportunity after the liberation.
3. that they were in the service from February 1941 to February, 1942 and were still in service.

The S.T.U. also advised teachers (15 of them) on various tenure matters. It had to seek legal advice on 2 particular cases. It realised that this was an important service which the S.T.U. should perform for its members and there were plans to strengthen the department that handled tenure cases and put it on a sound footing. Members were urged to co-operate with one another and make use of this service for their own benefit. In its first annual report, the S.T.U. Management Committee said:

The Union is, with all its limitations, trying to place advice and assistance at the immediate disposal of members for professional and other matters. It is expensive and prohibitive to tackle the difficulties individually, for in most cases a tangle of legal forms, arguments and regulations is involved. The law is complicated and complicated things are expensive. If individuals had to consult solicitors on every matter arising out of employment there would be certainly a large number foregoing this right because of the expense involved. (42)

The S.T.U. pursued the question of a higher cost of living allowance in conjunction with other public services unions and on the initiative of the S.T.U. a joint request was made to the Government of the Colony for payment of cost of living allowances on the same scale

as that paid to the Municipal employees as from 1st September, 1946. The Government replied on the 6th October, 1947 that rates of the cost of living allowances had been under consideration for some time and it ~~was~~ not therefore considered that there was adequate reason for the revision of the present cost of living allowances in advance of the recommendations of the Trusted Commission.

Before the end of its first year of existence, the S.T.U. had already decided that the aspirations of the teachers should be set against the background of the "whole" country, which included the so-called Malayan Union and not just that of the Colony of Singapore. On the 11th September, 1947, ⁴³ 95 members who attended the meeting of the S.T.U. voted unanimously for the affiliation of the S.T.U. to the Malayan Teachers' Union.

Malayan Teachers' Union

... We are assembled here as representatives of teachers in Malaya to unite for a common cause to serve our country in general and our profession in particular and for this purpose we are forming a central body, a truly democratic body, that will make representations on the common problems of the teachers and the profession.

Balhetchet.

After the war, Singapore was kept as a separate entity from the rest of Malaya; a new constitution was introduced to bring together the Federated and Unfederated Malay States as well as Penang and Malacca for the purpose of creating a Malayan Union while Singapore was to be a Crown Colony by itself. The affinity between the people of both territories remained. The free and unrestricted movement of the people between the territories continued. The leaders of the S.T.U. contacted the teachers' associations in the States and Settlements of the Malayan Union with the aim of introducing trade unionism to the teachers.

Up to the time of the Japanese attack on Malaya, there was one Director of Education, Straits Settlements and he was also the Adviser of the Education Department in Kuala Lumpur. There was one scheme of service for the locally recruited teachers and on the whole what affected teachers in Singapore also affected their colleagues in the Malayan Union. It was the accepted practice of the Colonial Government to establish identical salaries and conditions of service in the 2 territories; the wide disparity in salaries between the Europeans and the locally recruited in the Malayan Education Service was identical in both territories; so was the problem of the aided school teachers. Common experiences were another reason for the teachers in the 2 territories to come together. Past efforts at individual representations for redress of the multitude of anomalies and discriminatory practices were unsatisfactory to say the least. There was general disillusionment with the effectiveness of the teachers' associations and the M.T.F. in the pursuit of professional interests and of better terms of service. And there existed in the minds of the teachers that Singapore and the Malayan Union were one country. The S.T.U. was in a sense politically orientated as it believed that its plan of a unified education service would help bring the teachers together, despite the attempt of the colonial government to keep the 2 territories separate; and in another sense, the principles of unification challenged the right of the European officials to continue in their privileged positions and to determine policies when the locally recruited teachers had enough members of calibre to assume important positions in the education service. It was on the basis of the principles of "unification" that the teachers in the 2 territories came together. In that sense the

S.T.U. Memorandum was the anti-colonial manifesto of the teachers as it was aimed at bringing the teachers closer in the challenge against the colonial establishment.

What Malaya urgently and vitally needs is a unified education service which will help in all ways, culturally and academically, in bringing it into democratic maturity. A unified education service, by its very nature, will have a unifying influence on the peoples of Malaya in the fight against ignorance and in the acquisition of all things which are of paramount importance to the welfare of the country. (44)

There was feverish activity during the April school holidays in 1947 on the part of some of the S.T.U. leaders who travelled to the various States and Settlements along the west coast of Malayan Union and addressed teachers on trade unionism. The telegrams⁴⁵ sent from the major towns expressed great enthusiasm and response from teachers in the government and aided schools.

All going well send immediately 30 copies STU constitution to Yapp 138 F Malacca Street Penang - Sarma.

Ipoh convinced stop Perak forming Union within fortnight - Yapp.

Penang Union formed informal discussion Negeri Sembilan Selangor Penang Singapore on Monday at Seremban regarding federation - Sarma.

Delegation to visit Malacca Taiping and Ipoh stop shall be late stop very promising stop extra expenditure necessary consult committee - Sarma.

There were also telegrams requesting for the S.T.U. Memorandum. In the month of August, 1947, Sarma, Yapp and Scharenguivel followed up their effort in April as the catalysts of trade unionism for teachers in the Malayan Union. Some of the teachers' unions were formed in the teeth of opposition. In a letter to Seow Cheng Fong, Scharenguivel from "Somewhere in Malaya" wrote:

You are probably aware by now that teachers' unions have come into existence in Negri Sembilan and in Selangor - yes, even in Selangor despite the Selangor Teachers' Association's attempt

to sabotage it! We are now on our way to Penang. Have just received a letter from Penang. It's more hopeful than anything received from them before. We shall probably drop in on Malacca on the return journey. Malacca usually follows Negeri Sembilan so we are quite hopeful. (46)

There was official interference on the eve of the establishment of the Penang Teachers' Union (P.T.U.) on the 2nd September, 1947. The Senior Inspector of Schools in Penang sent a circular to every teacher in Penang, quoting from a private letter to him from the Acting Director of Education, Malayan Union, who said that "it seems so vain to shatter a sound Association which has achieved so much and can achieve much more with dignity and in its place to introduce disharmony, rankling, ...".⁴⁷ But the teachers were becoming part of the alert intelligensia, alive to their own importance, believing in new ideas and new standards and also having new concepts of their role in post-war Malaya.

12th September, 1947, Victory Day, saw the inauguration of the Malayan Teachers' Union, a federation of teachers' unions in the Malayan Union and the Colony of Singapore. Teachers' unions had already been established in the States of Selangor and Negri Sembilan and in the Settlement of Penang. On the day of the inauguration, the Teachers' Union of Malacca (T.U.M.) was established and its delegates joined in the discussions later in the day at the inaugural meeting, having driven all the way to Kuala Lumpur from Malacca. Observers from some other States and Settlements were present. Balhetchet, President of the S.T.U., assured the delegates from the teachers' unions that the S.T.U. was there to give full support and backing in whatever decisions that were made at the meeting. He then went on to say:

We have come as teachers for the common good of all teachers and therefore let us pool all the available resources. I know there have been misunderstandings and misapprehensions in the past and I must admit we are not entirely blameless but I wish to appeal

to you to discard whatever prejudices you may have against this or that state, settlement or colony. (48)

The aim of the teachers in the M.T.U., according to Balhetchet, was not only because "we want just and fair rates of remuneration but also a voice in the forming of educational policy of our country. I make bold to say that unless there is an element of genuine and sympathetic understanding on both sides, there will always be a pull in opposite directions to the detriment of education in Malaya".

Among the guests present were M.R. Holgate, the Acting Director of Education, Malayan Union, Jack Brazier, the Trade Union Adviser, Malayan Union (T.U.A.M.) and the Assistant T.U.A.M. The presence of colonial officials and the T.U.A.M. seemed to be a feature at trade union meetings in the Malayan Union. There also appeared to be a felt need for official sanction on the one hand and the desire to be treated as equals with the expatriate officials on the other. Such an attitude was probably the result of the patronage and official encouragement given to their former teachers' associations but there was among the teachers a feeling that the period of tutelage was over. It was this change of attitude that made the "correct approach" to be adopted when dealing with the Departmental heads an issue early in the life of the M.T.U.

The M.T.U. was established on a resolution moved by L. Van Geyzel of the Negri Sembilan Teachers' Union (N.S.T.U.) thus:

That this meeting resolves to establish the Malayan Teachers' Union with a federal constitution consisting of local teachers' unions and that the ultimate aim shall be an amalgamation of local teachers' unions. (49)

There was a sense of achievement felt by the teachers at the end of the inaugural meeting. In spite of the opposition of the diehard

elements in the M.T.F., not only were teachers' unions being formed but a central body of teachers - like the abortive Malayan Teachers' Association - was established. The frustration and disillusionment which they had experienced with the teachers' associations and the M.T.F. seemed to disappear and in their place there was confidence that trade unionism would give them the power to talk to their employers and be considered an important factor in the determination of educational policies. However this was not an occasion to forget the past efforts of their brethren. The N.S.T.U. was stirred to move a resolution putting on record "our appreciation of the pioneer work done by the M.T.A. 21 years ago in awakening local teachers to the ideas of unity and solidarity and professional betterment and we couple with our resolution the names of the Perak Teachers' Association and of the late Mr. P. E. Navarednam, first President of the M.T.A. and that of his wife, Mrs. N. G. Navarednam still active in Perak". The Union of Selangor Teachers (U.S.T.) then moved to record "their association of the work done for all and on behalf of the teachers of Malaya in recent years by the Malayan Teachers' Federation and couple with this resolution the name of the President, Mr. H.R. Cheeseman, C.M.G.". The U.S.T. also resolved to put on record "the great appreciation of the federating unions, actual and potential, of the generous and inspiring help freely rendered by Mr. J. Brazier, Adviser, Trade Unions, Malaya and his able assistant, Mr. Dhanalingam in their effort to set up a more effective machinery to represent the interests and growing needs of the teachers of Malaya".

The M.T.U. seemed to have official approval and encouragement. Everything seemed to augur well for the future of the M.T.U. The

T.U.A.M. said that the teachers had started something that they could not stop. But he warned of difficulties and also spoke of the challenges ahead thus:

You will have a hard time before you. We in England have had to fight many years to gain recognition.

Malaya is a country marching toward self-government and as such you the teachers are dealing with the most valuable raw materials - children. I am satisfied in my mind that the freedom of association that Government has followed is right. My Department will give every support to a body that speaks constitutionally on conditions of service but I am more keen about the fact that you should take an important part in the educational policy of the country. (50)

The patronising attitude of the T.U.A.M. was particularly difficult for the Singapore leaders to take. They knew perfectly well what their difficulties were and what they wanted to achieve. There was no need for a highly placed colonial official to tell them what they as teachers should do for their profession. But the power structure of the colonial set up was never forgotten; pressures from official circles and obstacles could hamper the progress of the M.T.U. in the days ahead. But if the T.U.A.M. could be of assistance in the achievement of the aims of the teachers in the 2 territories, they should not grudge him reading a homily to the teachers once in a while.

CHAPTER 5

THE MALAYAN TEACHERS' UNION I

The M.T.U. was a pioneer trade union for teachers in a country that was under colonial rule - a rule that was being challenged from many quarters. Singapore was made a separate colony after the war but to the teachers the Malayan Union and Singapore were one country. The M.T.U. attempted to bring the teachers from the 2 territories together and the plan for a unified education service not only helped to unite the teachers but it also challenged the privileged positions of the colonial officials. The M.T.U., led by the S.T.U., could be regarded as an organised challenge to the status quo, in so far as the education service was concerned. There was a hard core of official resistance to the idea that trade unionism was a good thing for the teachers. There was deep regret at the passing of the teachers' associations and the M.T.F. because, in the minds of the officials, they could serve a very useful purpose when it came to the setting up of the Whitley Council machinery for teachers and all those who were employed in the Education Departments. The teachers thought otherwise and were not prepared to give up their trade unions, which were independent of any control by any of the Departmental officials. And from the outset, the M.T.U. had to face questions pertaining to its recognition by the Education Departments, the use of the strike weapon, politics and the matter of

the "correct" approach to adopt in its dealings with the Departments. The most crucial of its activities concerned the question of salaries; this is discussed in Chapter 7. In its short history, it dealt with many important issues, like that of teacher-training and representation in Government bodies but what set back its progress when it was barely 2 years in existence was the refusal of the government to register the M.T.U.. Chapter 6 deals with this problem. But whatever the difficulties the M.T.U. suffered as a result of the refusal on the part of the Government to register it, the individual unions developed on their own, conscious of the areas where they had complete autonomy and resentful of interference, justified or otherwise, by any other union or unions.

From the beginning, there was clear acknowledgement and acceptance of the leadership of the S.T.U. in the deliberations and strategy adopted by the M.T.U. There was a show of challenge by the U.S.T. under its General Secretary, H.M. de Sousa, but it could not muster any support from the other teachers' unions. The Singapore teachers were the first group of government employees in Singapore to be established as a trade union and by the time the M.T.U. was established in September, 1947, it had already been involved in a multitude of issues. The S.T.U. acted as the general secretary of the Government Servants' Back Pay Council and participated as leaders of the Federation of Government and Municipal Services' Unions in the agitation for higher cost of living allowances and generally for better salary schemes and improved conditions of service. It was already making representations as trade unionists on establishment matters to the Department of Education and since April, 1947, it had been most vigorous in its agitation for a unified education

service. Thus by the time the M.T.U. was established, the S.T.U. leaders were easily the most experienced in the trade union field in the Malayan Union. Where the education service was concerned, they had already thought out and defined all the basic problems involved. Their professional activities in the first year of the existence of the S.T.U. enhanced the prestige and status of the government and aided school teachers in Singapore. Some of them were members of the M.D.U. and there were a few of them, aided school teachers, who were executive members of the party. The S.T.U. leaders were people with great confidence in their ability to lead and as teachers they did not feel inferior to the European teachers in the performance of their duties. They had the capacity to realise the aspirations of the general body of teachers and showed great courage in the face of challenges. The first leaders were people who were not prepared to accept privileged treatment. Under congenial conditions, there was no doubt that the S.T.U. and the M.T.U. would have advanced the teachers' cause.

The Strike Weapon

It was clear that the only way the teachers could achieve corporate legal status to protect their professional, economic and social aims was by forming a trade union. From the start, there was no illusion at all of the power structure in the colonial set-up. Conditions of service, they early realised, would not get better by themselves. The demand for the right to negotiate did not have the effect of changing the power structure. Negotiation was futile unless the M.T.U. had unity and the power which a trade union possessed by law, power arising from the withdrawal of the whole or part of their services in order to strengthen their position in collective bargaining.

The strike was considered a fundamental weapon of a union by the Singapore leaders. Teachers up to the present day have been vacillating about the use of the strike weapon. In the Government service, trade union activities could be restricted. G.O. 146¹ divided all Government employees into 2 categories - (1) the restricted officers and (2) the unrestricted officers. Under G.O. 147,² all restricted officers, including Government teachers, were not to engage in "any political activities whatsoever"; they "shall maintain reserve in all political matters or matters of public controversy". A Government teacher who was at the same time a trade union leader would find it difficult to agitate for rights which the Government was not prepared to concede - it could be interpreted by the Government that the matter concerned a political decision or that his action could be interpreted as an attempt at violating the G.O. or at coercing the Government. Disciplinary proceedings could be instituted against the trade unionist in question. The disciplinary powers in the G.O. were a deterrent. So were the colonial laws and the law concerning the organisation and registration of trade unions. S. Haridas, in his analysis of Government Unions in Singapore during the colonial period had this to say:

... Action taken by the civil service unions to enforce demands which the government is not willing to concede may be interpreted as an attempt to coerce the government. When the civil service takes direct action to enforce demands, the government can move swiftly and take effective disciplinary measures against the individuals involved. The service regulations or General Orders become very convenient and the government may not hesitate to use this legal weapon against 'erring' members of the civil service. (3)

The G.O. did not allow the teachers to go on a strike. However the Trade Union Ordinance 1940 did not prevent trade unions going on a strike. The contention of the legal adviser of the M.T.U. was that a

trade union would have to abide by the Trade Union Ordinance, 1940, not the G.O. These were questions for which the majority of teachers had no clear answers. Added to this was the problem which arose from the inability of the M.T.U. to be a registered body under the Trade Union Ordinance, 1940. However it went about its business as a trade union and stood for the rights of trade unions.

A member of the Singapore Advisory Council wrote to Sarma in October, 1947 on the subject of the strike weapon as follows:

If I were a clerk or a labourer, I would support the strike method as a last resort. As a teacher - no. Teachers and doctors handle human lives. My duty to them is even more important than my duty to my own interests - I would gladly join the S.T.U. if the strike clause were out (thus removing it as a weapon of negotiation, in the case of teachers). We are intelligent enough to know there are ways and means ... (4)

Sarma replied that the strike clause could not be removed because of the "whims" of one person; what was good for all the members of the M.T.U. should be good for a member of the Advisory Council.

There were however issues where the stand taken by the teachers' unions was clear. An example was the stand taken by the U.S.T. There was a threatened strike of government employees in Selangor. The Chief Secretary, Malayan Union, invited teachers to act as "volunteers" in the event of a strike by the government employees to ensure that there would be a continuity of service in the department on strike. Such an invitation, wrote H.M. de Sousa to the S.T.U., general secretary of the M.T.U., involved strike-breaking and the U.S.T. would have none of it.

If it is a question of the citizens voluntarily performing civic duties for the protection of the community, that is one thing; but for members of a trade union to black leg other trade unionists involved in a trade dispute is another. (5)

There was keen awareness of the political questions of the day but the views of the different teachers' unions seemed to be "to steer clear of politics that does not interfere with our profession".⁶ The Pahang Union of Teachers (P.U.T.) and N.S.T.U. were of the opinion that the M.T.U. should go ahead with professional matters. The U.S.T. said that the M.T.U. had many matters that were unresolved yet. In the opinion of the S.T.U., it was difficult to define "political" but if there was any question of taking a stand in any so-called "political" issues, like the question of income tax, the M.T.U. would take an independent stand.⁷

Owing to the basic work done by the S.T.U., the M.T.U. had well defined aims and its leaders were persistent and unrelenting in pressing for the attainment of the aims. One of its primary aims was to attain the status of a responsible body, representative of all the grades of teachers and be recognised by the Departments of Education. Hence the importance of the principles of the unified education service in order to provide an acceptable basis of co-operation for all the teachers whether they be Normal trained or graduate teachers. The Malayan Educator, the journal of the M.T.U., was vital to the work of the M.T.U.; it brought about a greater understanding of the new role of teachers; it provided Union news and information about the latest trends and techniques in the field of education. It was because of the vital role that the journal played that the Editor occupied an important place in the Executive Committee of the M.T.U. and as Editor he acted at most times as the moderating influence in the deliberations of the M.T.U. There were of course the Unions that pulled in different directions but the unity of interests of the unions was preserved up to

July, 1949 when the M.T.U. was refused registration and after that the Conference of Delegates of Teachers' Unions which succeeded the M.T.U. maintained a semblance of unity on the 2 vital questions of the unions, namely (1) a pan-Malayan organisation of teachers and (2) the principles of the unified education service.

Recognition

There was no doubt at all when it was first established that the M.T.U. would represent the majority of teachers in government and government aided English schools. The M.F.T. was then reduced to 3 teachers' associations, 1 in Perak, 1 in Johore and the other in Kedah; the Perak and Johore teachers' associations only existed in name as their members were already taking steps to form trade unions; the Kedah Teachers' Association was small and insignificant (and its members dissolved the association only in 1960 in order to form a trade union). It was rumoured that the M.T.F. sent in salary claims for and on behalf of all teachers in the Malayan Union and the Colony of Singapore. The N.S.T.U., P.U.T., and U.S.T. pressed for action to be taken by the S.T.U., general secretary of the M.T.U. The P.T.U. was of the opinion that a protest would serve no useful purpose and "would only embitter relations between the Department and the Unions".⁸ The U.S.T. general secretary wrote a strong letter to the S.T.U. as follows:

We in Selangor have gone to much trouble to impress on anti-Unionists our Unification Scheme and to emphasise that any inferior scheme offered would be detrimental to the profession. We are unable however to make all elements here see our points of view hence it is imperative that unauthorised opinion should go no further than the D. of E.'s waste paper basket. (9)

The S.T.U. wrote to the Director of Education that the M.T.U. represented the teachers of the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore as a body and any views put forward by the M.T.F., now

reduced to "a nucleus of individuals" should not be considered by the Director.¹⁰ The Director replied that the M.T.F. did not submit a salary scheme and did not claim, as the M.T.U. put it, "to arrogate to itself the responsibility of representing a teachers' organisation" except on behalf of its members.

I would add that the Federation Government has been kept fully aware of the reduction and the membership of the M.T.F. and of the formation of Teachers' Unions. (11)

From the point of view of the M.T.U., the reply was not satisfactory; it did not amount to a categorical rejection of the claims of representation of the M.T.F. The N.S.T.U. urged the S.T.U. to take a firm stand and demand forthright recognition. The M.T.F. was not even a trade union and negotiations for better salaries and conditions of work could only be attempted by trade unions. The S.T.U. then wrote to the Director of Education "to agree in principle that the salary scheme submitted by the Malayan Teachers' Union should be the only one recognised by Government as forwarded by representatives of Malayan teachers in government and government aided schools".¹² On the 3rd April, 1948, the Director informed the M.T.U. that its salary scheme was recognised as the salary scheme presented by the organisation which had the majority of teachers in government and government aided schools of the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore. The question of recognition was thus solved for the time being.

Whitley Council

The M.T.U. made some attempts in its first year at obtaining the establishment of a negotiating machinery based on the lines of the Whitley Council. The subject of the Whitley Council was first

raised by Kaher Singh, N.S.T.U., in May, 1947;¹³ he drew attention to the statement issued by the Chief Secretary to Heads of Departments and Resident Commissioners that the Whitley Council machinery was to be encouraged where Departmental Heads were not prepared for trade unionism. The declared policy of the Government was "the proper development of Trade Unions and similar bodies".¹⁴ It was necessary to provide some formal system of negotiating machinery for the use of the Government and the employees' organisations.

The present need for the early provision of recognised means of contact between employees and employers in Malaya needs no emphasis. The Government is the largest single employer in Malaya and must take the lead in establishing sound and fruitful employer-employee relationships. (15)

Council Paper No. 36, that was laid before the Malayan Union Advisory Council in August, 1946, consisted of the constitution of an Interim Joint Council for civil servants. The Governor in Council approved it; senior European Government officials adopted a non-committal attitude and the locally recruited staff did not show any great interest.¹⁶ At this stage, both the Singapore Federation of Trade Unions and the Pan-Malayan Federation of Trade Unions were trying to get complete control of all the non-Government employees' unions as well as the unions of Government employees. These federations were completely opposed to Whitley practices in any form. A Joint Council would be a highly involved method of settling industrial and professional issues. It was not a popular method. For the teachers, there were many problems involved. In the first place, the M.T.U. had among its members aided school teachers who were not government servants and the 2 Governments concerned were not interested in giving them the same conditions of employment as Government teachers. Another factor was

that the Aided School authorities were not organised as yet. Co-ordination was required between unions but the government did not seem to favour the federation of trade unions. The fact that there were then 12 administrations, 9 State and 2 Settlement administrations and 1 in Singapore and the fact that the education service was partly State/Settlement and partly Federal in the Federation of Malaya complicated matters. And establishment matters obtaining in the 2 Settlements (Penang and Malacca) would require, in law, reference to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and consultation with the Government of Singapore.¹⁷ Another problem concerned the settlement of issues which lay beyond the scope of the Departmental machinery.

In February, 1948, the M.T.U. sub-committee¹⁸ on the formation of a Whitley Council for teachers saw the Director of Education, Federation of Malaya; the Director stated that government school teachers should have a separate machinery from that of the aided school teachers. The M.T.U. members, except for the P.T.U., were in favour of one Whitley Council for both government and aided school teachers. The subject of the Whitley Council cropped up again on October, 1948. The Chief Secretary wrote¹⁹ to each of the teachers' unions and made the following points:

1. From the letter, the "difficulties" mentioned by the Chief Secretary in the event of the registration of the M.T.U. would be insurmountable. "Government teachers would lose the benefit of Whitley Council machinery".
2. There were differences in the conditions of service between government and government aided school teachers. There was a diversity of interests between the Education Department and the Aided School authorities.
3. The teachers' unions only confined their membership to teachers, including headmasters.

4. A teachers' association would serve the interests of teachers better.

The teachers' unions sent their separate replies to the Chief Secretary at the same time. All the replies covered the following points:²⁰

1. The Whitley Council machinery was a voluntary machinery and neither party was forced to establish or operate the machinery. It was the view of the M.T.U. that the Whitley machinery would be further discussed after the M.T.U. was registered. It was a negotiating machinery and by any name it was called it was designed to create a recognised channel of approach between the employing body and the union or unions. And even though the aided school teachers were not considered Government servants the teachers' unions were not able to find any technical, administrative or legal reasons why the unions could not be parties to a negotiating scheme with the Aided School authorities under a title other than Whitley as well as parties to a Whitley scheme with the Government.
2. The teachers' unions were convinced that it was a legitimate function and object of the unions to work in a constitutional manner to remove the differences in conditions existing between government and aided school teachers. The object of forming a single union, the M.T.U., was to remove these differences more effectively.
3. The unions did not include administrative officers, inspectors and other categories of the civil service because (a) no other union or association of government employees was required by Government to embrace all types of employees in its fold; (b) administrative officers and other officers had or could have an association or union to cater for their special interests - e.g., European Officers' Associations, Malayan Civil Service Association; (c) the Unions felt that there would be difficulty in collective bargaining if their membership included administrative officers who would for the purpose of the negotiations be required to act as departmental representatives or employers with their Union representatives facing them; (d) the teachers felt that it was their right to decide for themselves their own constitution, rules and objects. If they did not conflict with the Trade Union Ordinance 1940, that right should be recognised.
4. The unions did not wish to form teachers' associations to be registered as Societies as they had already dissolved their former associations and formed teachers' unions. A teachers' association, registered as a Society in the

Federation of Malaya or in the Colony of Singapore would not be in the position of the N.U.T. because a Society in the local context would not have trade union objects.

The subject of a Whitley Council for teachers cropped up again in April, 1949. The Secretary of the Whitley Councils, Malayan Union, informed the U.S.T. that he was of the view that all government officers in Divisions I, II, III and IV could negotiate only through this body. The Teachers' Union of Perak (T.U.P.) expressed the view that if the M.T.U. joined the Government Staff Whitley Council, it would be doing a disservice to all members because the machinery was unwieldy and also because the M.T.U. had government and aided school teachers as members.²¹ The Editor (Scharenguivel) felt that the Colonial Government would not restrict such a Council since by allowing the formation of trade unions it had by implication also conceded teachers the right to establish such negotiating machinery as would best serve their purpose.²² The S.T.U. wrote to the Secretary, Whitley Councils, to press for an independent negotiating machinery. In just over 2 months after this, the M.T.U. became an illegal organisation.

"Correct" Procedure

Any suggestion or method that might possibly bring about division or that was reminiscent of the days of the teachers' associations would be seriously dealt with in the Executive Committee of the M.T.U. The general policy on procedure had already been discussed during the informal meeting of delegates from the N.S.T.U., U.S.T. and S.T.U. in August, 1947.²³ It was agreed that all matters of a "parochial" nature would be dealt with by the State or Settlement Unions while those that were general, affecting the education service of "the whole country", would be the concern of the M.T.U. The "procedure" and conduct of

business of the former teachers' associations was deplored because of its unofficial and secret basis between the principal office-bearers and the highly placed European officials in the Departments. There was always the suspicion of "jiggery pokery" going on. The conduct of business by office-bearers of the M.T.U. should be on an official basis.

The first and most important incident of this nature took place in June, 1948. The Interim Report of the Special Committee, set up to re-examine the salary recommendations of the Trusted Commission, was released on the 31st May, 1948. The S.T.U., general secretary of the M.T.U., sent to all unions an extract each of the Report, together with a draft statement on the recommendations. The N.S.T.U., President of the M.T.U., had at the same time sent out another draft statement to all the Unions for their consideration. By the 12th June, 1948, all the Unions, except the T.U.M. and the U.S.T., had indicated their general agreement with the draft statements and had thus defined their stand toward the new salary recommendations. Being informed by H.M. de Sousa (U.S.T.) that the Director would like to have an interview with the M.T.U. on the 19th June, 1948, the S.T.U. wrote²⁴ to the Director of Education asking him to confirm the date. Sarma waited for a reply until the 16th June and as there was no reply forthcoming from the Director, Sarma rang him up. The Director said he had not received the letter and stated that it was not he who suggested the meeting but H.M. de Sousa. He added however that he would be pleased to meet representatives of the M.T.U. and he would grant leave to the delegates of the teachers' unions in the Federation of Malaya for the suggested M.T.U. Executive Committee meeting in Kuala Lumpur on the 18th June, 1948. Sarma then informed all the unions about the meeting of the

Executive Committee. There was dissatisfaction about the way the interview with the Director of Education had been arranged.

The meeting discussed the campaign to be adopted in order to win support for the cause of the M.T.U. The question of the correct procedure was postponed to the later part of the meeting. H.M. de Sousa asked for permission to read a private letter which he had received from the Director of Education which might help in formulating ideas on the campaign. Sarma opposed this as it was not an official letter to the M.T.U. and suggested that the M.T.U. should be independent in its campaign and forget that the Director of Education had promised any backing. He expressed the view that the discussion that followed should not have a bearing on any unofficial information received. This was an extreme view. The deliberations would not be tainted with official patronage and the M.T.U. was to take an independent stand of its own. The campaign was planned.²⁵

The confused manner in which the interview with the Director of Education was arranged was generally criticised. The constitution of the M.T.U. was specific in its rule regarding interviews with officials. The Chairman (L. van Geyzel, N.S.T.U.) said that whatever might have been the motive of the U.S.T., there had been confusion and irregularity in M.T.U.'s transaction with the Director of Education. It was only that morning that the M.T.U. learnt from the Director of Education that he was aware that H. de Sousa had intercepted the letter addressed to him by the S.T.U. The procedure that was agreed upon was that "in meetings between the Department and the M.T.U., the M.T.U. should be represented by at least 2 officials (2 Unions holding office) and that all such meetings should be strictly official".²⁶ Sarma explained²⁷

that the M.T.U. was designed to be an organisation that would speak truly for the teachers as a whole, not just for the group of office-bearers. Conduct of union officials should not bring frustration upon members. It was well known that much "confidential" information passed between Departmental Heads and the teachers' associations and the letters and notes passed between them became to all intents and purposes the property of the officials concerned, not the property of the associations or their members. The way to "succeed" in the education service was clear. A post in a teachers' association could prove an excellent means for self-advancement. Such conduct struck at the very roots of healthy trade unionism. The M.T.U. was, as indeed its member Unions were, for the collective good of the members. As such, he continued, the transactions of the M.T.U. should be official and should be made known to all its members. If the general secretary (S.T.U.) of the M.T.U. should relax on this point, Sarma stressed, then it should be censured by the Executive Committee which was the supreme body for the teachers. Scharenguivel (Editor, S.T.U.) stated that he was aware that some unions had come with the sanction of their respective Management Committees to support a vote of censure if the explanations of the U.S.T. were unsatisfactory. The Editor was placed in the unique position of being able to propose without consultation or approval of the union of which he was a member. Scharenguivel felt that the explanations of the U.S.T. had "inexplicable discrepancies" but because this was the first time such an incident had occurred, he would refrain from moving any such resolution. This code of conduct was not strictly adhered to after July, 1949 when the M.T.U. was refused registration and the Conference of Delegates took its place as the

central organisation of teachers from both the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore.

Teacher-training

The teacher training machinery consisted of the Normal training classes. Before the war, the Director-Adviser decided on all questions regarding rejoining or leaving the Normal training classes and modified the rules when he thought that changes were called for. The Director-Adviser had the responsibility of ensuring uniformity of treatment regarding all questions on Normal training. In its letters to the Directors of Education, in the Malayan Union and the Colony of Singapore, the M.T.U. wanted the Education Departments to adopt the following suggestions:²⁸

1. That a student teacher failing in one subject in the Normal Training Examination should be allowed to take the subject as a referred subject at the next examination.
2. That a period of 5 years be allowed as the maximum period for the completion of the Normal Training Certificate.

The M.T.U. was unhappy about the apparent lack of uniformity of rules in the Departments in the States and Settlements; some trainees who failed a subject in the Normal training examinations in Selangor were allowed to re-sit for the subject in question but not the trainees in Malacca. The Departmental heads had at various times apparently changed their minds with regard to the period that should be allowed a student to complete the Normal training course. The Director of Education, Malayan Union,²⁹ said that all the points raised had been accepted as modifications pre-war - i.e. sanction was given pre-war for the rules to be amended so that a candidate whose general record and results justified it could be granted an additional year by the Director-Adviser; students were not failed in the whole examination

by the awarding committee because of failure by a small margin in one subject because "compensatory discrimination" was exercised. He added that after the war, on account of the special conditions, leniency had been shown both in the margin of failure allowed in individual subjects and in the general standard required for passing. In other words, what the Director of Education, Malayan Union meant was that each case would be treated on its own merits. While in one case it might be only fair that the course should be extended to 5 years, in another case it might not "maintain a high standard of qualification".

It was early realised that the Normal training classes were unsatisfactory for the supply of adequately trained teachers. The U.S.T. in its memorandum on Emergency Training Colleges said that the Saturday classes, which followed, in most cases, a full week's teaching were not suitable for the professional preparation of teachers. Normal instruction which took place once a week tended to lose its point and drive, sandwiched as it were between a succession of fully occupied school weeks. The U.S.T. memorandum criticised this method of teacher-training as inadequate and its re-introduction immediately after the war, without any modification, as a grave mistake. The memorandum³⁰ went on thus:

... That so many of the Normal students have to take on full time teaching in schools despite the fact that they have not finished their professional training cannot be justified on the grounds of expediency. These teachers are learning the job in the wrong way and there is a great danger that cynicism and disillusionment will be the chief characteristics of these unfortunate teachers within a short period of time.

The solution, according to the U.S.T., was the setting up of Emergency Training Colleges. There would be difficulties but they could be overcome. The M.T.U. members would be in a position to help the

authorities in any measures that might be necessary. The memorandum set out the scheme for producing "a certain number of teachers in one-third the time the existing Normal classes take". The Emergency Training Colleges, which were established in the United Kingdom to fill the gaps caused by the war without lowering the efficiency of the teaching service, could similarly be set up in the Malayan Union at 3 proposed sites, namely Penang (to serve North Malaya), Kuala Lumpur (to serve Central Malaya) and Johore Bahru (to serve South Malaya). All students should live in so that they might derive the greatest benefit from the College and expenses should be defrayed by the Government and a nominal amount should be paid as allowance to the students. The minimum qualification for admission should be a School Certificate and a pass in Oral English. The duration of the course, as suggested by the U.S.T., should be 48 weeks (i.e. 46 weeks of actual work, 5 hours per day in a $5\frac{1}{2}$ day week, not including periods of physical education, 1 week's break at Easter and 1 week's break in August). The existing Normal training course was a 3-year course and instruction could only be given on Saturdays for $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours, excluding school holidays. According to the U.S.T., the total number of hours of instruction would only come to 555 hours, less than half the number of hours envisaged for the proposed Emergency Training College. After successful completion of the course at the college, a trainee would be entitled to a certificate, equal in all respects to the certificate issued for Normal trainees, on condition that he should prove himself competent in a school under the supervision of the principal. The U.S.T. also drew up the curriculum to be followed by the trainees. The Principals for the Emergency Colleges should be recruited from officers who had actually run Emergency

Training Colleges in the United Kingdom. ("We understand that many of these colleges in the U.K. are about to close down as the object for which they were established has been achieved"). The U.S.T. felt that the staff should be the best available and that priority should be given to the colleges even at the expense of the schools; it was better for schools to be at a disadvantage for a few years than for the Department to turn out half-trained teachers.

There was a note of urgency in the U.S.T. memorandum. In Selangor the number of pupils per teacher was 35 plus (whereas the figure proposed by the Director of Education, Federation of Malaya was 25); the number of qualified teachers was 251, unqualified teachers 174 whereas the Director of Education, Federation of Malaya, maintained that "not more than 33 1/3 of the teachers should be in the unqualified grades 'accepted as the 'danger ratio' in most parts of England". Selangor was therefore well within the 'danger ratio' and the other States and Settlements were also in the same position.

The J.T.U.³¹ was sceptical about the whole scheme. As most of the student teachers held no certificate other than the Cambridge School Certificate, it did not believe that the curriculum suggested by the U.S.T. could be properly completed in 48 weeks. In its view, any length of time that was less than 3 years would not be sufficient to turn out efficient teachers of fair scholastic standing. "Inefficient teachers of low academic attainment will only affect the Unification of the Education Service adversely". A high standard in the profession was the aim. The J.T.U. also went on to say that there were too few of the locally recruited teachers who "have been anywhere for refresher courses of sufficient length - and we do not believe there are many to

choose from".

The T.U.M.³² was not in favour of the Emergency Training Colleges. Apart from the fear that there would be insufficient support for the scheme because of the existing poor salary scheme for teachers, the likely result of such a recommendation would be the creation of a third group of teachers who might be considered half-trained teachers owing to the short period of intensive and accelerated training and these teachers might not be mature in experience and age to hold their own in the teachers' world. The Normal training instructors, who would constitute the staff of the proposed Emergency Colleges, were already found wanting by the Carr-Saunders Commission which suggested that they should undergo refresher courses in the proposed University of Malaya.

There was genuine fear that the suggestion of the U.S.T. might postpone the establishment of proper Teachers' Training Colleges which the Governments themselves said was an urgent necessity. The S.T.U.³³ rejected the plan for emergency training colleges as outlined by the U.S.T. and asked the member unions to press for the immediate establishment of Teachers' Training Colleges under the supervision of the University of Malaya. The Carr-Saunders Commission saw the proposed University Department of Education as performing a direct service by providing a series of short courses for Normal Training instructors. It might enter into an examination relationship when the proposed Teachers' Training Colleges were established and it could help in planning courses of study at the Colleges.

There was no support for the proposal of the U.S.T. for the establishment of the Emergency Training Colleges.

The Carr-Saunders Commission made recommendations³⁴ which were

sound but there was always the feeling that the colonial establishment would not accept the recommendations of the Commission. There was a network of Normal training classes in the Colony of Singapore and in the Federation of Malaya. The problem as the Commission saw it was this: in the event of the Training Colleges absorbing all the Normal training classes, could it be possible for the Colleges to be built into a coherent regional training service and at the same time preserve and develop cultural variety and "do justice to the underlying unity of professional training and enable all who undergo training in a real sense to share one another's work and influence one another's activities?" The solution was the setting up of a Central Training Council whose responsibility it was to advise the 2 Governments on the framework of the whole training service - to prevent the haphazard, wasteful and ineffective growth of training programmes, to recommend suitable location, size, character of the new training colleges, relationship with all types of schools with the University and to determine whether it was practical to pool and interchange staff and share amenities among some of the institutions composing the teacher training service and also to maintain the proper balance between the legitimate claims of the 3 main racial groups. The persons sitting on the Council should be persons with an intimate knowledge of education and social affairs in the 2 territories; the Chairman should be an independent and "official" person. The Carr-Saunders Commission produced a Report that was not lacking in vision. The recommendations it made about teacher-training and the ideals it stood for did not however move the officials of the Education Departments who seemed set in their pre-war ideas and attitude.

Singapore

The Ten-Year Plan for education envisaged the setting up of a Teachers' Training College which was initially planned to provide a 3-year full-time course of professional training - but the period was later cut down to 2 years. It was hoped that it would eventually replace the Normal training system as a means of producing teachers for the primary schools. In January, 1950, the Management Committee of the S.T.U. was alarmed at the danger to professional standards because of the proposal by the Director of Education for setting up an Emergency Training Scheme for teachers.³⁵ It asked for more information because it wanted to study the situation but the Director of Education said that no detailed information pertaining to the training scheme was available. What the S.T.U. feared was that the Department of Education was not going to set up the T.T.C. in 1950 and that the Emergency Training Scheme was its substitute. There was of course a great increase of schools as a result of the implementation of the Ten-Year Plan and this called for an increase in the number of teachers. The Emergency Training Scheme was intended to recruit teachers under the Five-Year Supplementary Plan. As the S.T.U. was kept in the dark, it came out with a press release warning against expansion in education. The Director of Education thought that the warning was a breach of professional discipline. The misunderstanding arose from the lack of lines of constructive communication between the S.T.U. and the Department of Education. The Director of Education suggested that it might be productive of better relations between the S.T.U. and the Department if the former Education Liaison Committee was reinstated. The Committee last met in 1949 and was not reinstated.

The Director of Education was able to explain later that professional standards would be lowered temporarily to recruit teachers for the Emergency Training Scheme. Candidates should have sat for the School Certificate examination and they would be put on the short scale of \$95 - \$5 - \$100. Those with the School Certificate would work under the salary scale for Government afternoon teachers. All candidates had to undergo an intensive 3-month training course, equivalent to 1st Year Normal. Those without the School Certificate would be assisted to get the School Certificate and facilities would be made available for them by the Department. The Director of Education then assured the representatives of the S.T.U. that the minimum professional qualification would still remain the Normal Training Certificate. Those who qualified under the Emergency Training Scheme were encouraged to join 2nd Year Normal and complete the Normal training. They were all given 5 years in which to complete the training. In a situation of teacher shortage, the Director of Education accepted the proposal of the S.T.U. that he should consider the question of appointing qualified married women teachers whose applications had been turned down previously by the Department. The S.T.U. co-operated in the Scheme and submitted a panel of 30 teachers who would give courses of lectures to the trainees.

Entrance requirements were lowered in order to satisfy the demand for additional teachers. The T.T.C. introduced a 3-month intensive course of training of 130 lecture hours to take the place of the 1st Year Normal Training course. 2 such courses were conducted in 1950, 2 in 1951 and 2 in 1952. The original 3-year Normal training course was re-introduced in 1953. By 1953, it was realised that the Normal

Training system could not be abandoned in view of the educational expansion and the small output of the Certificated Teachers from the full-time courses at the T.T.C. could not possibly meet the demand for teachers in the English schools. But what was basic to the thinking of the Department was that the Normal Training Certificate was "inadequate" and the S.T.U. was to regret its co-operation with the Department in carrying out the Emergency Training Scheme. At the first Final Examination for the Certificate course students in 1952, 21 of them failed but they were awarded the Normal Training Certificate the next year. The S.T.U. expressed great indignation; the drop-outs of the Certificate course were considered the equals of the holders of the Normal Training Certificate. The Certificate was accordingly weakened. As the Vanniasingham Report put it, the intensive courses conducted by the T.T.C. "did not produce such satisfactory results with students just fresh from school as it had in previous years with students of more advanced age".³⁶

Social Responsibilities

The teachers' unions were generally aware of their social responsibilities in the larger framework of the Malayan and Singapore setting. There was opposition to the introduction of Income Tax by all but 2 of the Unofficial ~~/~~ in the Singapore and the Malayan Advisory Councils. Progressive taxation was most essential for any real progress to be made towards social reform. But the setting up of the machinery for such taxation was only possible by the use of the special powers of the Governor in Council. The M.T.U. strongly supported the unpopular proposal for the introduction of Income Tax for the purpose of improving the educational and other social services of the country.³⁷ It also

called upon all trade unions to demand the introduction of income tax at the earliest possible date. The "lamentable opposition to income tax" would not have arisen, according to Silcock, had there been an articulate trade union movement at the time, "with power to influence the whole political thought of the country".³⁸ The M.T.U. was one trade union with a strong social and political sense but the colonial atmosphere was such as to stultify the growth of any articulate anti-colonial trade union movement.

A new consciousness of the role teachers should play was clearly evident at the inaugural meeting of the M.T.U. No matter what interests they represented when they were nominated to serve on government bodies by the Malayan Union Government or the Colonial Government of Singapore, they were to consider themselves firstly as members of the teaching profession. Chang Min Kee, General Secretary of the P.T.U., was appointed to the Finance Fact-Finding Committee of the Malayan Union. Chang stated that he felt that he was nominated as a teacher and therefore he had to do his duty to the teachers. All the unions³⁹ promised to give him all the necessary assistance he needed. The S.T.U., general secretary of the M.T.U., was to be informed of all proceedings. Sarma stressed that there was a necessity for a common understanding and policy. Balhetchet (S.T.U.) then said that "if any extension of social services and improvement of our working conditions are to be sought, we should be prepared to make recommendations to Government on the subject of raising suitable revenue for the country".⁴⁰

At the Conference held on the 20th August, 1950,⁴¹ a discussion took place on the question of whether Tan Chong Bee (P.T.U.) who was nominated by the Government of the Federation of Malaya to sit on the

Central Advisory Committee on Education was to accept the appointment. He was appointed as a nominee of the trade unions but he had no power to report back to the unions the proceedings of the Advisory Committee. It was suggested that the Unions should request Tan to serve on the Advisory Committee because the unions would then have at least one trade union representative on an important Government Committee. The S.T.U. pointed out that such a decision would serve no purpose or alter the attitude that the Government was adopting towards the representatives of the teachers' unions. It was true that Tan was a trade unionist but by the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee, he was prevented from acting as a trade unionist. It was finally decided that Tan should resign from the Advisory Committee. The General Secretary of the Conference, the J.T.U., was asked to write to the Chief Secretary that the nominee of the teachers' unions was withdrawn.

In the field of education, the teachers' unions responded to the call for contributions to the University fund. It was agreed in July, 1949,⁴² that each Union would be left to decide the best way of raising contributions and these contributions would be paid into a central fund in the name of the M.T.U. The purpose for which the contributions were to be utilised could not be decided yet as it would depend on the size of the contributions. The endowment of a Chair in Education at the University would be a worthy contribution of the teachers but the sum collected was insufficient and it was donated to the general University Fund. There was a new energy and a more emphatic realisation of the importance of University education immediately after the war.

The teachers themselves had the tremendous urge for self-improvement. This was evinced by the overwhelming response to the

Vacation Course at the University of Malaya organised by the S.T.U. The S.T.U. planned the Course, held at the University of Malaya (in Singapore), for 200 teachers but the response was so great that the organisers tripled the number and had to curtail the number from Singapore as the S.T.U. felt that the teachers from the Malay Peninsula should be given priority. The purpose, as outlined by Balhetchet, President of the S.T.U., was to keep in touch with educational progress, with one another and with education in the country. There was an obvious need for refresher courses and the attendance at the Course was an indication of the magnitude of the need. Dr. G.V. Allen, Vice-Chancellor of the University, spoke to the teachers thus:

The remarkable attendance at this Course of nearly 600 teachers and over one-third of that number women teachers augurs well for the future, partly because it shows that you are not satisfied with the progress you are making and partly because of your admirable anxiety to add to your equipment by refreshing your knowledge and becoming more up-to-date. (43)

This Course was followed by other vacation courses, the last of such courses organised by the S.T.U. was in the August school holidays in 1951.

Activities of Some Unions

The teachers' unions, however, were active in presenting their grievances pertaining to establishment matters in their respective State or Settlement Education Departments. They had their own social and cultural activities. And they were interested in community projects. The T.U.P.,⁴⁴ for instance, contributed towards the cost of setting up a Rehabilitation Settlement at Batu Gajah as part of the scheme of the Perak Anti-Tuberculosis Association. Like many other Unions, the T.U.P. was affiliated to the Adult Education Association of the State. There was a wide scope of activities of the members in each of the Unions.

The leadership at State or Settlement level would determine some of the activities. The U.S.T.,⁴⁵ for instance, in contrast to the S.T.U. was fond of conferring honorary membership on important European officials connected with trade unionism of the teachers or education in the country. Among the persons honoured in this way were: J.A. Brazier, the T.U.A.M., "for all the assistance he has given us"; Richard Sidney "for his support of the teachers in the Young Malayans". In November, 1947, it managed to collect a big name in education as its honorary member, A.W. Frisby, Director of Education in Singapore.

The habit of giving tea-parties to all retiring officials of the Education Departments was one that was indulged in by all the teachers' associations. With some of them, it had been developed into a fine art as the annual tea-party was considered the biggest event of the year, an event which called for elaborate preparation and eulogistic speech-making. To the S.T.U. the tea-parties savoured of nothing more than sycophancy; they went against the new concept some of the teachers had immediately after the war. But it modified its position as in the case of the retiring Art Superintendent for Schools in Singapore. The Management Committee had on 2 occasions put aside the idea of having a tea-party to the Art Superintendent. A Committee member⁴⁶ of the S.T.U. wrote to Devan Nair, general secretary of S.T.U., that the matter be re-considered. He wrote:

I am aware of the feeling among us that we should in no way pander to officials who do nothing for us - I submit that Mr. Walker is a teacher - a true and sincere teacher - and as a body of teachers we should recognise his invaluable contribution to this community.

The reason why the Management Committee on the 7th March, 1950 decided against the proposal was that a farewell function in honour of the

retiring Art Superintendent would set a precedent that would necessitate similar functions to other officials of the Education Department. The Committee member said he felt very strongly that the S.T.U. should be capable of acting independently according to each particular situation and if the Union should decide to give a tea-party to one retiring European official it did not follow that the union was necessarily committing itself to similar action on other occasions. The S.T.U. Management Committee finally agreed to giving the tea-party. The other Unions in the Federation of Malaya were not as squeamish about giving tea parties to Departmental officials as the S.T.U.

The unions resented any interference in their "domestic" affairs by other State or Settlement unions. The T.U.P.,⁴⁷ for instance, saw nothing irregular about the position of V.D. Kuppusamy, who was elected President of the T.U.P. in November, 1951. Kuppusamy was at that time a member of the Malayan Aided Schools Council (M.A.S.C.), which was formed a few months previously to represent all the employing authorities of aided schools in both the Federation of Malaya and in the Colony of Singapore. The P.T.U. questioned the dual role of Kuppusamy but its action was described by the Management Committee of the T.U.P. as "both unwarranted and premature". The Committee of the T.U.P. admitted that Kuppusamy's membership of the M.A.S.C. was a matter of concern to all the teachers' unions but "it fails to see how its presidentship can be the subject of discussion and decision by other Union or Unions. This is a matter which can be discussed only by members of the T.U.P. and no State or Settlement Union has the right to question the inherent and democratic rights of the T.U.P. members to elect whomsoever they please to executive office". A ruling from the Conference, the parent body of

teachers' unions would have regularised matters but it did not at the time.

The S.T.U.

The activities of the S.T.U. during the period it was affiliated with the M.T.U. were many and varied.

Education Liaison meetings⁴⁸ were held in 1948 between the Education Department and the S.T.U. Their purpose was to form an informal committee comprising the chairmen of the various sub-committees of the S.T.U., the General Secretary and the Inspector of Schools. Subjects such as teacher-training, refresher courses for teachers, school broadcasting and even the prevention of cruelty to animals were discussed. And as a result of the work of the S.T.U. on the subject of school broadcasting, a special Liaison Meeting between the Department, Principals of Schools, the Department of Broadcasting and the S.T.U. was held on the 27th June, 1948. This committee set up a standing committee to advise and offer guidance and consisted of representatives of the Education Department, the University Department of Education, School Broadcasting Department and the S.T.U. The Education Liaison Meetings were useful as they assisted in providing closer co-operation between the teachers and the Education Department. The first annual report of the M.T.U.⁴⁹ stated that the Director of Education, Federation of Malaya, would encourage the establishment of such committees between the teachers' unions and the Education Departments of the various States and Settlements of the Federation. This might serve the purpose of co-ordinating the educational activities that a teachers' union might contemplate with the Departments concerned.

In its second annual report,⁵⁰ it was recorded that fortnightly meetings were held during the year by members of the S.T.U. to discuss professional matters such as school discipline, personal relationships in the school community, the Education Code and the teaching of English Literature, among other matters. Regular meetings of this nature went on for 2 years. Sub-committees were formed whenever the need arose; thus the Adult Education Sub-committee was formed when one of its officials represented the Union in the deliberations that led to the formation of the Singapore Adult Education Council in 1950. It had sub-committees on such subjects as Retiring Age, Married Women Teachers, Teachers' Training College, Tenure, Salaries and Drama. It also organised courses in phonetics for teachers and its members conducted classes in English for the peons and servants of the Education Department. Its sports and social activities were relatively successful. It organised the first Youth Drama and Music Festival in 1950 for Singapore schools and youth groups.

The S.T.U. since its formation had been pressing for representation on the Singapore Education Board.⁵¹ The Colonial Secretary held the view that while a member of the S.T.U. might well be personally suitable for appointment to the Board, it would unduly restrict the choice of members of the Board by reserving one seat exclusively for the S.T.U. Further representations on the subject were made. A new Education Bill was introduced in 1948 by which finance was separated from educational policy and under the Singapore Education Ordinance, the Governor in Council approved representation of the S.T.U. on the Singapore Education Committee under Section 7 (2)(c) of the Ordinance. The President of the S.T.U. would be the automatic nominee on the Committee.

The S.T.U. had jointly struggled with the other trade unions of employees of the public services since September, 1947. However it was only in March, 1948, that the Colonial Secretary appointed a special joint committee under the chairmanship of Benham to investigate the whole question of temporary cost of living allowances. Balhetchet, President of the S.T.U., was elected by the various trade unions of government employees to serve on the committee.⁵² As a result of the Committee's report, the cost of living allowances were revised with retrospective effect from 1st August, 1947. The new rates of allowances were also payable to those who were temporary officers but they were only eligible to half the standard housing allowance if not provided with quarters. Aided school teachers were not given any housing allowance and it was only after 3 years of agitation on the part of the S.T.U. that they received the housing allowance.

On the initiative of the S.T.U., a meeting of trade union representatives was held on the 29th September, 1950.⁵³ The meeting was called to discuss and take action on the rising cost of living. They did not raise this issue earlier "because we believed that the economic conditions would be established some time and that prices of the essential commodities at least would be stabilised at reasonable prices. We find that we were completely mistaken in our belief".⁵⁴ They were greatly disappointed that the Government had not taken any effective steps to control the prices of the conventional items in the budget of every family "with the result that the Malayan market is constantly fluctuating on the wrong side for the wage-earners". Because they believed for a fact that all quasi, semi and non-Government

employing bodies were usually guided by the principles that Government adopted in the matter of wages and allowances towards its employees, it was decided that in the matter of cost of living allowances, the trade unions of Singapore should unitedly press their claims.

The Cost of Living Allowance Committee⁵⁵ of the trade unions of Singapore tabulated all the facts and figures to show the "distressing plight in which the wage and salary earners and more especially those in the lower and middle income groups are placed". They then urged the Government to institute strict control of prices in order to curb the tendency for prices of commodities to increase; the effort of the Government and other employing bodies in "pegging down the wages and salaries of their servants" was merely an exercise of futility if proper steps were not taken to stabilise commodity prices. They also called upon the Government "to introduce an equitable distribution of essential commodities through co-operatives and workers' distributing organisations in addition to a strict control of prices to ensure the stability of the cost of living".⁵⁶ The cost of living allowances last fixed by the Government in 1947 were grossly inadequate and the unions requested all employing bodies "to consider increasing immediately the cost of living allowance to all workers in Singapore".

The Committee made vigorous representations to the Government on measures for keeping down prices of essential commodities. Its leaders were Devan Nair and Sarma; Devan Nair was its Secretary and Sarma its President. The leadership of the S.T.U. in the civil service unions was unchallenged. However with the arrest of Devan Nair and Sarma on the 8th January, 1951 by the Colonial Government, the leadership of the S.T.U. in the civil service unions waned and finally ceased to be

of any importance. It became, under the management of the young Normal trained teachers, "introverted" and the pan-Malayan phase of its activities ended although it did co-operate with the other civil service unions on specific issues in Singapore. It joined the Council of Joint Action on the 31st July, 1952; the Council⁵⁷ was formed to fight for the family allowance to be paid to the locally recruited personnel in government service. The Europeans in government service were offered extra allowance, known as "non-pensionable expatriate allowance" if they were married; the trade unions of the civil service saw the non-pensionable expatriate allowance as family allowance and regarded the whole issue as that of racial discrimination against the locally recruited personnel in favour of the European officers. The Council decided to include in the fight for family allowance the consolidation of the cost of living allowances into the basic salaries of government employees. The Ritson Commission was appointed in 1953 to examine the vexed question of allowances in general. Its Report was published on the 12th June, 1953 and it was concerned with the principle of wage policy in general.⁵⁸ Government then conducted negotiations with the trade unions represented by the Council of Joint Action in order to prepare conversion tables based on the Ritson recommendations. The Whitley Council system was introduced in 1954.

CHAPTER 6

THE MALAYAN TEACHERS' UNION II

... We believe our Unions to be instruments for good, for the betterment and enlightenment of this country. At a time when most trade unionists in the country were wavering and doubtful of the future, Teachers' Unions not only continued to exist but carried out firmly and resolutely with our programmes. We had to fight for recognition and registration! But fight we did and fearlessly because we believed we were right and our cause just. We suggest that we have set an example and done a service to trade unionism in this country and therefore to the people of this country.

Editorial, Malayan Educator.¹

There was uneasiness in the minds of teachers on the question of delay in the registration of the teachers' unions in the Malayan Union. Only the S.T.U. was a registered body. But the official explanation of the Trade Union Adviser, Malayan Union (T.U.A.M.) helped "to remove all vestiges of uneasiness" and doubts in the minds of the teachers about the legality of their trade unions.² There was no difficulty, assured the T.U.A.M., of extending the definition of "Workmen" in the Trade Union Ordinance 1940 - "... we could have got this definition extended within a fortnight". The real difficulty was that the government school teachers sought to include in their trade union membership non-government teachers, i.e. the aided school teachers. Section 25(2) of the Trade Union Ordinance laid down the condition that Government employees could organise into trade unions but they must confine the

membership to Government employees. A revision of Section 25(2) was necessary and had to be tied up with the amendment made in the Colony of Singapore. The T.U.A.M. assured them that there was no need for the teachers to worry as the changes to the Ordinance would be made. He exhorted the teachers thus:

Get on building up your organisation slowly and steadily on good foundations. Waste no time in worrying about the things that you either cannot control or are not in the interests of teachers' trade unions. (3)

The teachers would like very much to be able to follow the advice of the T.U.A.M. and work towards achieving a unified education service but it was precisely the questions over which they had no control - like the question of registration of the M.T.U. - that set back the progress and development of the M.T.U. Registration of the M.T.U. was a legal requirement. The political division of the Malayan Union and Singapore was another factor to be considered. At the meeting of the Executive Council of the M.T.U. in December, 1947,⁴ the S.T.U. (general secretary of the M.T.U.) reported that the application for registration had not yet been sent because one of the trustees nominated had not given his consent yet to serve in that capacity. At the same time, the U.S.T. brought up the question of having a federation of all teachers' unions in the Malayan Union, a federation within the M.T.U. The advice came from the T.U.A.M. The S.T.U. feared that this was a move to cause a split among the teachers' unions and strongly opposed the suggestion of the U.S.T. The N.S.T.U. reminded the meeting that the main object in forming the M.T.U. had always been unity, one central teachers' organisation for the Malayan Union and Singapore.

The T.U.M. said that since there were 2 governments, 2 such federations of teachers might be necessary but the M.T.U. could still

be retained as an overall central organisation of teachers, one federation to deal with both the Malayan Union and Singapore governments and the other dealing with the Malayan Union only. The suggestion of the U.S.T. arose because of the political division of the 2 territories, the Malayan Union and the Colony of Singapore. The Editor (Scharenguivel, S.T.U.) then referred to the Pan-Malayan Postal and Telecommunication Workers' Union which catered for all the employees of the Postal and Telecommunication Departments in the Malayan Union and Singapore. In the case of the M.T.U., the 2 governments had already taken cognizance of the M.T.U. as an organisation representing teachers of English schools in the 2 territories.

The U.S.T. stressed that there was not the slightest intention of causing a split. Just as it would not tolerate government teachers forming a separate union from that of aided school teachers, it would not tolerate a split among the unions of different States and Settlements in the Malayan Union. If there was a feeling that there would be a split then the U.S.T. would withdraw unreservedly the proposal it had made. The T.U.M. then proposed that "the M.T.U. does represent both Malayan Union and Singapore teachers collectively and separately".⁵ The proposal was seconded by the P.T.U. and unanimously approved. For the time being, the question of the form and composition of the M.T.U. seemed to be settled.

On the 11th December, 1947, the M.T.U. applied for registration in Singapore. On the 17th of that month, the Registrar of Trade Unions (R.T.U.)⁶ in Singapore informed the S.T.U. (General Secretary of the M.T.U.) that it had no objections to registering the M.T.U. in Singapore but stated that he was getting in touch with the Malayan

Union authorities before proceeding with the registration of the proposed M.T.U. The R.T.U., Singapore, contacted his counterpart in the Malayan Union. The R.T.U., Malayan Union, then replied that professional bodies could not be registered as trade unions until amendments to the Trade Union Ordinance 1940 had been made. The M.T.U. members felt that it would be useless for the M.T.U. to apply for registration until the State and Settlement unions had been registered.

Meanwhile objections to the organisation of teachers' unions which included teachers in government as well as government aided schools were raised by the Government of the Federation of Malaya. The Acting Deputy Chief Secretary⁷ pointed out the fact that there was considerable difference in the conditions of service between government and aided school teachers and that it was not clear to him how one trade union could reconcile the diverse interests of the 2 categories of teachers on establishment matters. He said:

The present Teachers' Union does not allow for membership by the administrative officers and inspectors and would lead to a cleavage between the two types of government teachers.

I am to request you to be good enough to examine these comments and to let me know as early as possible whether a solution can be found to the difficulties mentioned therein.

One solution would be to form a teachers' association, open to all government and aided school teachers and which would be registered as a Society, having rules enabling Government officers to join without being in any way contrary to the General Orders. It would mean a return to the discredited teachers' association. The S.T.U. (general secretary, M.T.U.)⁸ wrote to the Acting Deputy Chief Secretary as follows:

It is the main objective of the Unions to secure a Unified Service in place of the differences which do exist at the

present time within the same service and the trade union machinery does legalise such agitation.

The interests of the administrative and the executive are not identical; they cannot be expected to function satisfactorily within the same organisation. This was realised by many of the teachers' associations whose rules did permit this unhealthy composition.

From December, 1947 to February, 1949, the M.T.U. did not receive any official word from the R.T.U., Federation of Malaya. But on the 26th February, 1949, the R.T.U.,⁹ in a press notification, said:

The Malayan Teachers' Union which is understood to be a federation of State and Settlement Unions, has not yet applied for registration. It is believed that it decided to wait until the member unions had been registered.

The R.T.U. then said that it would consider an application if made by the M.T.U. but he added that if it had been in existence for more than a month it would have been an illegal organisation. The M.T.U. was alarmed by the press notification and addressed the R.T.U. on the matter on the 10th March, 1949.

The delay in the registration of the teachers' unions and the M.T.U. did not hold up the work of the State and Settlement unions; they had their meetings with their respective Education Departments in each of the States and Settlements on tenure and other problems concerning individual teachers. However it held back progress of the M.T.U. The formation of the Whitley Council machinery was one instance. In February, 1948,¹⁰ the M.T.U. entered into negotiation with the Director of Education, Federation of Malaya, regarding the formation of a Whitley Council machinery for all government and aided school teachers. It was the opinion of the Director of Education that government school teachers should have a separate machinery from that for aided schools teachers. All the member unions of the M.T.U.,

except the P.T.U., were in favour of one Whitley Council for all teachers but the J.T.U. suggested the teachers' unions should first get themselves registered before the M.T.U. could take steps towards the attainment of one Whitley Council. The Whitley Council machinery presented the only possible machinery for teachers to use, with some modifications, as a means of dealing with their countless grievances and of achieving a unified education service. It was either this "colonial" machinery or the ad-hoc meetings arranged with the Directors of Education. But Whitleysm, according to the Chief Secretary, Federation of Malaya, should supercede trade unionism. The M.T.U. did not see how this could be. The Government of the Federation of Malaya was not getting the correct picture of Whitley Councils and conciliation machinery. As stated by Gamba,

... Whitleysm had never been intended to supercede the unions but to co-ordinate and regularise trade union activities. There was need therefore for effective negotiations between the heads of departments and trade unions and for a simple Appeal or Arbitration machinery to be placed into operation, leaving aside systems which, no matter how sound theoretically, in fact would eventually have encouraged frustration and done much harm to staff relations. (11)

The R.T.U., Federation of Malaya, wrote to John Eber, the legal adviser of the M.T.U. on the 18th March, 1949. He stated that if the M.T.U. had been established before the 12th June, 1948,

you should have applied for registration within one month of that date.

As you have not applied for registration within the time permitted by Section 59 of the Trade Union Enactment 1940, I must request you to cease your activities in the Federation of Malaya until such time as you have complied with the statutory provisions relating to the formation and registration of a federation of Trade Unions. (12)

In reply the legal adviser wrote:

The delay in the registration of the various teachers' unions in the Federation has not been due to any fault of our clients and the delay in our application has been due only to their impression that any such application would not be entertained until the teachers' unions in the Federation had been registered. (13)

The teachers' unions at the time of the formation had already completed and sent all the forms of application for registration.

With regard to your request contained in paragraph 4 of your letter that our clients cease their activities in the Federation until such time as they have complied with the statutory provisions, our clients would point out that they took all steps possible at the time, nearly 18 months ago. (14)

At the Executive meeting of the M.T.U. on the 22nd April, 1949, it was agreed that the President (Tan Chong Bee, P.T.U.), Vice President (Tan Cheng Lock, T.U.M.) and Sarma should have an interview with the R.T.U., Federation of Malaya, to seek permission to hold the M.T.U. Executive Council meeting which could be declared illegal. The R.T.U. authorised the proposed meeting and made the following points¹⁵ regarding the organisation and registration of the M.T.U. as follows:

1. As Singapore was a foreign government in relation to the Federation of Malaya, it could only be "associated" with the M.T.U.
2. A pan-Malayan body was not necessary because all teachers would unnecessarily be involved on a pan-Malayan basis in local issues which affected only a particular State, Settlement or the Colony of Singapore. Moreover such an organisation like the M.T.U. would appear "to hold a pistol to the heads of the 2 governments, either of which may not have been responsible for a particular issue".
3. The Registrars would not be able to effectively supervise the M.T.U. as the R.T.U. in Singapore would have no jurisdiction in the Federation of Malaya and the R.T.U. in the Federation of Malaya would have no jurisdiction in the Colony of Singapore.
4. It was the contention of the R.T.U., Federation of Malaya, that the M.T.U. would unnecessarily involve the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore.

The reply¹⁶ by the M.T.U. officials was as follows:

1. It understood the political division of the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore but it was the policy of the M.T.U. that in any matter affecting all the teachers, the M.T.U. would have to make representations to the 2 governments simultaneously. There was no question of mere "association" with implied co-operation between the teachers of the Federation of Malaya and Singapore. It was one of active and equal co-operation as would be the case among constituent members of a federation, all of whom being loyal to a single constitution.
2. The M.T.U. was well aware of the difference between local matters and pan-Malayan matters and negotiations at various levels. There was no denying the fact that the terms of service of teachers of government and aided schools were the same for both teachers in the Federation of Malaya and in the Colony of Singapore; in the matter of administration, they saw little or no difference. Again in the matter of the Mission authorities, there was a pan-Malayan concept. There was never any intention of holding a threat to any employers. The M.T.U., emphasised the officials, was an organisation that was interested in bringing all the teachers together in as close and compact a manner as possible under the circumstances to serve the interests of the Malayan community.
3. Union books could, on any given notice, be produced anywhere for inspection. There was nothing subversive or clandestine in its activities.
4. The M.T.U. would not unnecessarily involve the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore. The fact was that teachers in government aided schools, whether in the Colony or in the Federation, had to have the same qualifications and received the same salaries. Although the 2 territories were divided politically, in the matter of administration there did not appear to be fundamental differences. There might be superficial differences and indeed they would exist between State and State, Settlement and Settlement in the Federation and between the Federation and the Colony but these did not affect the overall policy of defining the qualifications and conditions of service of teachers in government and government aided schools in the 2 territories.

The President (Tan Chong Bee, P.T.U.) and Sarma had an interview with the T.U.A.M. and in the resumed Executive Council meeting in the same afternoon, Sarma informed the Council that the T.U.A.M. was of the opinion that the M.T.U. should send in the Registration forms to the

R.T.U., Federation of Malaya and wait for him to raise objections.¹⁷ The T.U.A.M said he would only be in the position to offer advice if he knew all the real objections in writing and in the meantime the M.T.U., in his opinion, should continue its activities as usual. The Council then agreed that the Malayan Educator should continue its regular publication as it was most vital to the M.T.U.'s existence then to have it out but it was decided that it should appear without the words "Official Organ of the Malayan Teachers' Union" on the cover page. It should carry the words "Published for the Singapore Teachers' Union by Seah Yun Chong" somewhere at the back page, without any undue prominence.

On the 8th July, 1949, the application for registration of the M.T.U. was formally refused and the M.T.U. became an illegal body. According to the R.T.U.,¹⁸ the M.T.U. failed to comply with Sections 58 and 59 of the Trade Unions Enactment 1940, as amended by the Trade Unions (Amendment) Ordinance No. 9 of 1948 relating to the formation of a federation of trade unions. Section 58 required from each Union wishing to join the federation a resolution to participate in it, passed by a majority of votes taken by secret ballot and the resolution should be served on the R.T.U. and all members of the respective Union not less than 14 days prior to the meeting. But Section 58 was later amended by Ordinance No. 9 of 1948; 2 or more registered trade unions whose members were employed in a similar trade or occupation could form or create a federation of trade unions. The R.T.U., Federation of Malaya, clarified the position with regard to the amendment in a letter¹⁹ to the U.S.T. on the 27th June, 1949 as follows:

Now that some of the Teachers' Unions are registered there is no objection to two or more registered unions forming a

Federation of Teachers' Unions in accordance with the provisions of Section 58 provided that such a Federation is confined to TEACHERS' UNIONS REGISTERED IN THE FEDERATION OF MALAYA.

The M.T.U. was in fact refused registration because of an amendment to the Trade Union Enactment after its formation. The T.U.A.M. came in for some criticism in an editorial²⁰ in the Malayan Educator:

We have always consulted the T.U.A.M. and his assistants and the M.T.U. was established and our application for registration etc. etc. were done with his advice. The T.U.A.M. said that he could only advise within the law. Being law-abiding by training and inclination, we agree - but we wonder ...

As the S.T.U. saw it, there were 2 alternatives; it had either to accept the separation from the M.T.U. and merely act in close liaison with the M.T.U. on pan-Malayan issues or to dissolve all the teachers' unions and forthwith form a Teachers' Union of Malaya (including Singapore) along the lines of the Postal and Telecommunication Workers' Union. The S.T.U. leaders were in favour of an amalgamated union of all teachers in the 2 territories, since a federation of teachers' unions was illegal. It was up to the delegates of the teachers' unions to decide. The delegates from the P.T.U., T.U.P., U.S.T., N.S.T.U., U.S.T., J.T.U., P.U.T., K.T.U. and the S.T.U. met at 331 North Bridge Road, Singapore on the 25th August, 1949, in order to seek a course of action that would ensure the unity of teachers in the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore. They also discussed the Benham Report and other union matters.

The Chairman (Tan Chong Bee, P.T.U.)²¹ outlined 3 courses of action which members of the M.T.U. could pursue -

1. to carry on as it was and to meet as delegates when necessary for unified action;
2. to form a federation of teachers' unions within the Federation of Malaya and then invite the S.T.U. to join the federation;

3. to form a pan-Malayan Teachers' Union and have branches in each of the States or Settlements and in the Colony of Singapore.

The delegates met their legal adviser and also the T.U.A., Singapore. All the delegates except H.M. de Sousa (U.S.T.) agreed that the best course of action was to form a Pan-Malayan Teachers' Union, like the 2 Pan-Malayan unions, one for Postal and Telecommunication workers and the other for Railway Workers with branches in Singapore and whose Registration Certificates were granted by the R.T.U., Federation of Malaya and technically, according to the T.U.A., Singapore, they did not exist in Singapore.

The structure would then be that instead of having State/Settlement Teachers' Unions and above that a federation of these unions, as was your original plan, you would have a Pan-Malayan Union, of which individual teachers would be members, with branches in the various States or Settlements.

The teachers' unions could continue to function until the P.M.T.U. was formed and after its organisation had been consolidated, the teachers' unions might consider it more practical to dissolve the teachers' unions in order to avoid duplication of work. It was then decided to hold the inaugural meeting of the P.M.T.U. in October, 1949, and the J.T.U. was to act as pro tem Secretary.

The S.T.U. conducted a referendum to gauge the extent of support the S.T.U. delegates to the inaugural meeting of the P.M.T.U. on the 22nd October, 1949 would receive from teachers in Singapore. In the explanatory note,²² accompanying the Referendum form on the 15th October, 1949, Devan Nair, General Secretary of the S.T.U. said:

The proposed organisation will not be a Federation of Trade Unions in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore as such a federation cannot be registered under the Trade Union Enactment, which does not allow a Singapore union to federate with unions

in the Federation of Malaya.

We visualise the M.T.U. as a Pan-Malayan organisation of teachers with Branches in all the states of the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore. The P.M.T.U. will be registered in Singapore as "The P.M.T.U., Singapore, Branch".

As far as we can gather, there is no legal prohibition against the form of a Pan-Malayan organisation formed on the above lines. Most of the members of your Management Committee feel that the cause of teachers will only be strengthened by the formation of this Pan-Malayan organisation of teachers.

405 out of the 450 members voted in favour; this meant that a majority of more than five-sixths of the S.T.U. membership favoured a pan-Malayan organisation.

However there were still doubts in the minds of the delegates from the teachers' unions in the Federation of Malaya. The date fixed for the inaugural meeting of the P.M.T.U. became that for a Conference of Delegates.²³ The P.T.U. proposed and J.T.U. seconded a motion that it was advisable to wait for the five-sixth majority of members of the State unions to join the proposed P.M.T.U. before preparing for the inaugural meeting. Another motion, again proposed by the P.T.U. and seconded by the N.S.T.U., called on the pro tem Secretary, the J.T.U., to write to the R.T.U., Federation of Malaya, for his views on the formation of the P.M.T.U. with Singapore as a branch and on the question of S.T.U. members holding office. A copy of the draft constitution of the P.M.T.U. - prepared by the S.T.U. - was also to be sent to the R.T.U. for his comments. The Conference then went through a very heavy agenda which included a Draft on Conditions of Service, Teachers' Training Colleges, Post-School Certificate Classes, Adult Education and Mass Literacy, Revision of the Education Code, Science in Girls' Schools, Appointment of Headmistresses, Memorandum to Heads of the

various Mission Authorities, Liaison with the Pan-Malayan Council of the Stamford Club, the Question of Retrenched Teachers and the Report of the Central Advisory Committee on Education in the Federation of Malaya.

Kanthaswamy of the J.T.U. (pro tem Secretary, P.M.T.U.) got a reply from the R.T.U., Federation of Malaya on the 31st October, 1949.²⁴ The R.T.U. said that it was necessary for prior permission of the Chief Secretary to be obtained before government teachers in English schools might become members of the proposed P.M.T.U. Aided school teachers seemed to be exempted. He also informed Kanthaswamy that the question of a teachers' union with branches both in the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore was under consideration by both Governments. Under the circumstances, he added that it would not serve any useful purpose by amending the draft constitution of the proposed P.M.T.U. but he would do so as soon as he knew what the requirements were going to be.

Kanthaswamy²⁵ wrote to the Colonial Secretary of the Colony of Singapore and the Chief Secretary of the Federation of Malaya for permission for teachers, qualified or probationers, employed in the various government schools and instructors of junior technical trade schools to join the proposed P.M.T.U. which was to be formed shortly. On the 21st December, 1949, the Chief Secretary²⁶ informed Kanthaswamy that it was necessary for teachers to apply individually to him for permission but he would permit the Union to make block applications for its members. Kanthaswamy²⁷ then suggested to the general secretary of each of the teachers' unions **that they should** make a formal application for permission to join the proposed P.M.T.U. and the applications should

be posted simultaneously by all the unions on the 21st January, 1950.

There was however a lack of conviction that the P.M.T.U. was the solution. Y.K. Seah, general secretary of the U.S.T., wrote to all the unions that he and some other delegates to the Conference on the 17th December, 1949 had a private discussion with the T.U.A.M. after the Conference. The T.U.A.M. was in favour of the former M.T.U., a federation of trade unions; but it was impossible to retain the federation under the Trade Union Ordinance 1940 unless the S.T.U. was out. In a letter to the general secretary, T.U.P., the T.U.A.M.²⁸ said that he had gone to a great deal of trouble to get both governments to amend 2 Trade Union Ordinances to allow the federation of trade unions existing in both the territories and what was needed was patience. He said that he was in an invidious position, being asked to advise **about** on something which no one appeared to have a clear idea of **actually** wanted; Kanthaswamy had asked him to draft rules for a union with State branches, including Singapore and yet, at the same time, he had other teachers' unions writing to him on the assumption that it was a federation of trade unions that was envisaged and not the dissolution of the existing unions for the purpose of organising a pan-Malayan organisation.

Kanthaswamy²⁹ wrote to all the teachers' unions and suggested that it was not proper for other unions to write to the T.U.A.M. on the subject of the proposed P.M.T.U. As pro tem Secretary, the J.T.U. took action as directed by the Conference held in Singapore on the 25th August, 1949 to form a union with branches. That decision, he reminded the unions, was arrived at after having interviewed their legal adviser and the T.U.A., Singapore. The "unofficial meeting" arranged by certain

delegates with the T.U.A.M. had resulted in the T.U.A.M. being "not quite clear of the proposed P.M.T.U. while in fact we had come to a definite decision". At the Conference held on the 17th December, 1949, the delegates had decided to hold the inaugural meeting in Kuala Lumpur during the April school holidays and that the P.M.T.U. would be established.

The anxiety of the teachers was expressed by Kanthaswamy when he wrote to all the teachers' unions on the 2nd March, 1950; it had already been 9 months since the parent body for teachers had been dissolved and until then the teachers' unions still seemed undecided as to the nature of their future organisation. He hoped that definite steps would be taken at the Conference in April. Devan Nair³⁰ in a letter dated the 11th March, 1950 said that the Management Committee of the S.T.U. was perturbed by "this rather vacillating attitude of all unions" in the matter of the formation of the proposed P.M.T.U. He reminded the unions of the decisions taken at the Conferences on the 25th August, 22nd October and 17th December, 1949. At the December Conference, 5 out of the 9 unions had reported a five-sixth majority of their membership in favour of the proposed P.M.T.U.

The U.S.T. had steered clear of the proposed P.M.T.U. since the 25th August, 1949. Writing to Kanthaswamy, the general secretary of T.U.M.³¹ said that after studying the views of the T.U.A.M., his Management Committee "is of the opinion that a federation of Teachers' Unions in the Federation with the possibility of bringing in the S.T.U. as an affiliate is the more logical step to take at the moment". The influence of the T.U.A.M. was unmistakable. Kanthaswamy³² also mentioned certain other unions had expressed their dissatisfaction with the

proposed P.M.T.U. Under the circumstances, Kanthaswamy saw that there was no useful purpose to be served by having a Conference in April, 1950. It was then decided when the Delegates met on the 15th April to form the proposed P.M.T.U. with aided school teachers in the first instance because it was felt that the Chief Secretary's permission for government school teachers to join it would be delayed. The Chief Secretary³³ in a letter to Kanthaswamy on the 28th February, 1950 had stated that application of teachers in government schools to join the proposed P.M.T.U. should be made by the individual teachers concerned and that collective applications which he had at first permitted were now unacceptable; applications had to be signed by the teachers concerned.

At a meeting held at 298 Pahang Road, Kuala Lumpur on the 16th April, 1950, A.J.A. Petrus proposed and Seow Cheng Fong seconded the motion, which was unanimously passed, as follows:

We the teachers assembled here from the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore resolve to form a Pan-Malayan Teachers' Union whose membership shall be open to all English school teachers and whose name shall be decided at its inaugural meeting.

A provisional committee was elected. Sarma was elected Chairman and K.V. Thaver (Selangor) was elected General Secretary. Government school teachers who attended the meeting attended as observers. Thaver was instructed to invite all aided school teachers from the 2 territories to join and also to write to all government school teachers requesting them to apply to the Chief Secretary, Federation of Malaya or the Colonial Secretary, Singapore for permission to join the proposed P.M.T.U.; he was also instructed to interview the T.U.A.M. with the draft rules and then circulate the original draft to members of the provisional committee, to issue a press release on the formation of the

P.M.T.U. and to inform the R.T.U., Federation of Malaya and Singapore about the formation of the P.M.T.U. The inaugural meeting was fixed on the 28th June, 1950 and was to be held in Kuala Lumpur.

At the inaugural meeting³⁴ of the P.M.T.U., Sarma said that the teachers assembled there symbolised the unity of their aim and purpose. They were teachers from all parts of the country. By country, he meant "the Federation of Malaya and Singapore" where as far as educational policy was concerned, it was the same for both territories. He then traced the history of teachers' unions in the 2 territories. He went on to say:

... We have first of all to secure the complete organisation of all teachers in this country. ... Then we have to secure the removal of racial and other discriminations in the Service. This has been included as one of the specific objects of the Union since it is also one of our primary and vital objects to secure a Unified Service and we can achieve this only when the principle of equality between teachers and teachers is recognised.

Teachers had to struggle as a group to achieve their aims. They could not hope that the colonial establishment would do what was best for the teaching profession. It had banned the M.T.U. and was now considering reducing their salaries. He was referring to the Benham Report published in Singapore and its recommendations were likely to be accepted in the Legislative Councils in both the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore. The ^{gauge} cost of living was rising and expansion of education was fast. Although there was a great need for recruiting more teachers, the colonial establishment still treated teachers as shabbily as ever.

We want a fair deal based upon the work we are doing and not upon qualifications (so far unobtainable and at any rate irrelevant in the circumstances), race or sex.

In our petitions for the advancement of our conditions of service we have so far appealed to the Government, to the Legislative Councillors and to the general public.

It is high time that we called upon the student population in this country to take an interest in a fair and decent livelihood for their teachers. We have common interests. Not only do students depend upon us for their future welfare but many of them would also in the near future become teachers. They should therefore be called upon to support us.

Sarma was elected President and Thaver General Secretary. Seow Cheng Fong was elected Editor. On the 18th July, 1950, the S.T.U. applied to the Colonial Secretary for permission for its members to join the P.M.T.U. On the 5th October, 1950, the Colonial Secretary³⁵ wrote that there was no objection to the individual teachers who had signed the S.T.U. application joining the P.M.T.U. But just a month later, the R.T.U., Singapore wrote to Thaver saying that the application for registration of the P.M.T.U. could not be allowed "on the ground that the rules and constitution of the proposed Union conflict with the Trade Union Ordinance, 1940". Thaver³⁶ reported that the matter of registration had been referred to both Governments for their opinion but since the R.T.U., Singapore, had refused to register the P.M.T.U. there was no point now in urging the R.T.U. and the Chief Secretary of the Federation of Malaya to reply to the applications made by the P.M.T.U.

The Conference of Delegates of Teachers' Unions was to all intents and purposes the successor to the banned M.T.U. It had no legal status but it existed from July 1949 up to the end of 1951 as the central organisation of the teachers' unions. The Chairman was Sarma (up to the end of the Conference in December, 1950) and the General Secretary was Kanthaswamy. Sarma was the brilliant organiser and the intellectual force behind the teachers' movement. There were tremendous odds. Kanthaswamy was the painstaking and hardworking secretary and realised the difficulties the organisational work involved. And although the Conference had no legal status, it was the only adequately representative

body of teachers and the Conference continued the work of the former M.T.U. On the 8th January, 1951, Sarma and Devan Nair were arrested and detained in Singapore and that was the end of the pan-Malayan aspirations of the S.T.U.

On the 24th August, 1951, the P.T.U., U.S.T., T.U.P., N.S.T.U. and J.T.U. sent an open letter³⁷ to all members of the teachers' unions in the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore; in that letter they discussed the question of a Malayan Teachers' Union in all its aspects. They were convinced that

1. It would not be possible for a Malayan Teachers' Union to be registered as a single Pan-Malayan Union with individual direct membership and having branches on State/Settlement/Colony basis to include Singapore until the Trade Union Enactment 1940 was amended in both territories.
2. Owing to the state of emergency because of the communist insurrection, the competent authorities were not in the position to give priority to the amendment of the Trade Union Enactment so as to permit the formation of Pan-Malayan trade unions in the near future.
3. It was of the utmost importance in the circumstances that the teachers' unions in the Federation of Malaya should take immediate steps to form a federation of teachers' unions in the Federation of Malaya and get it registered as early as possible.
4. Such a Malayan Teachers' Union would give them the necessary legal status to negotiate at federal level and press for the establishment of Whitley Councils at all levels which would be able to deal effectively with urgent issues affecting the interests of teachers in the Federation of Malaya.
5. They were convinced that such a Malayan Teachers' Union would not result in any cleavage in policy or principles with the Singapore Teachers' Union for they were determined that there should be full and close co-ordination between the member unions of the Malayan Teachers' Union and the S.T.U.

At the close of the letter, it stated:

We wish to assure our colleagues in Singapore that the formation of a Federation of Teachers' Unions in the Federation of Malaya

will only temporarily deprive the Singapore Teachers' Union of a legal status in such a federation and that we are determined to have Singapore within our ranks before long. Until such time, it is our sincere desire and wish that the Singapore Teachers' Union should continue to play as active and influential a part in all our deliberations as they have in the past. We therefore trust that the Singapore Teachers' Union will appreciate the situation in the Federation and our goodwill in this respect and give us their full support in this matter.

In December, 1951, the Malayan Teachers' Union was formed in Kuala Lumpur. The S.T.U. was not a member and has remained a separate union ever since. The resumption of the fight in Singapore for the unified education service from where Sarma and Devan Nair left off in January, 1951, the looming importance of the Normal Training Issue and the new leadership from the ranks of the young Normal trained teachers were some factors which contributed to the lack of any liaison between the Malayan Teachers' Union and the S.T.U. Political events also encouraged separate development. An important factor was the dwindling away of the "founding fathers" who had taken part in the deliberations of the M.T.U. and its successor, the Conference of Delegates of Teachers' Unions. This was an important phase in the history of the S.T.U. and the ideas and methods adopted during this phase had their devoted followers and no doubt their repercussions in the years ahead.

CHAPTER 7

THE MALAYAN TEACHERS' UNION III

Since the liberation teachers (like other public servants) have had their pre-war salaries supplemented by temporary cost of living allowances, but the total emoluments have not been such as to give satisfaction to the present staffs of schools or to encourage recruitment to the profession on an adequate scale. For the fulfilment of our future plan the most vital need is qualified teachers and to obtain these salaries suitable to present conditions in Malaya are essential.(1)

The Pyke allowances were hopelessly insufficient; they did not in any way bear any relationship with the rapidly rising cost of living. But if the allowances were meant to check the mounting dissatisfaction or divert the attention of the civil servants from the highly emotional issue of back pay then they had failed miserably. The appointment of the first salaries commission in early 1947 to deal with the multitude of problems brought about by the war, the Japanese occupation, the British military occupation and the changes which resulted from the creation of the Malayan Union and Singapore was made at a time when the Colonial Secretary spelt out the terms of final settlement of the back pay claims by the S.G.S.B.P.C. in the C.S.O. Circular No. 24 of 1947. There were complaints about inadequate salaries, lack of definite channels of promotion and about other establishment matters and the issue of back pay was later relegated to the background. The back pay campaigns in the Malayan Union and Singapore were characterised by

protest meetings, the first time Government employees ever protested openly against the Colonial Government; the issue however fizzled out after the Secretary of State for the Colonies rejected the joint memorial of the J.C.S.A. (Malayan Union) and the S.G.S.B.P.C. in September, 1947. The Salaries Commission did bring about a feverish study and comparison of the various salary structures and conditions of employment, of salary and establishment principles in relation to local circumstances and to practices generally in the United Kingdom. It also brought about a broad measure of agreement on general and specific issues among the different groups of government employees brought together by common experiences and broadly similar aims.

The procedures adopted in the formulation of salary structures for the public service in later years were set by the appointment of the first post-war salaries commission. It was appointed by resolution of the Singapore Advisory Council. Its first act was to invite representations for all staff organisations with which it would try to make every effort to understand their cases and to reach agreement, if possible, with the staff representatives. When the final proposals were made and presented to the Governor, they were subject to debates in the Advisory Council and finalised by a special committee and the appropriate authority would meet further representations of the staff organisations in order to convey the impression that any revision of salaries for any group of employees had been made after detailed study and in full consultation with the staff representatives. On 9th December, 1947, the Report of the Trusted Salaries Commission was published.

Some of its general recommendations² were as follows:-

1. The Commission saw the urgent need of a machinery whereby Government employees would have a chance of stating their case in some recognised way. It suggested joint boards upon which various sections of the public service would be represented in order to discuss with the Government representatives questions of salaries and conditions of service, with some independent arbitral tribunal to which disputes could be referred. This was of direct interest to the unions; the Commission commented with obvious approval the exploratory moves made by the Malayan Union government for setting up the Whitley Council machinery without any discussion on the relevance of the Whitleyism in the local setting.
2. It recommended the setting up of the Public Services Commission to deal with matters affecting the public services in the Malayan Union and Singapore. Records of officers in Divisions I, II and III could then be furnished to the Commission.
3. It abolished the controversial children's allowance. It criticised it on the grounds that it discriminated in favour of the European class of officers in the civil service. But then it was changed to "expatriation" pay through carrying into effect Colonial Regulation 197.(3) All European officers, whether they had families or not, obtained the expatriation pay which was pensionable.
4. It considered that the application of the principles of Colonial Office White Paper No. 197 should not be allowed to cause any lowering of the educational and professional standards laid down for the various services.
5. It classified all the different posts in 4 divisions.

The Trusted Commission recommended that the education service be divided into 3 groups, consisting firstly of Europeans recruited as Education Officers, secondly of Raffles College graduates and thirdly of Normal trained teachers. Such divisions, as construed by the S.T.U., perpetuated the existing discriminatory practice in the education service and were contrary to declared policy. The White Paper No. 197 stated, among other things, that "the salaries of all posts in the public service of a Colony should be determined according to the nature of the work and the relative responsibilities irrespective of race or

domicile of the individuals occupying the post". The Commission offered a special scheme to European masters who were now styled Education Officers "for the purpose of paying them higher salaries".⁴ The locally recruited teachers with the ability to perform the work required of the Unified Colonial Education Service - as demonstrated during the period of the B.M.A. - were denied their rightful place by the stipulation that an Honours degree of a British University with a recognised Teacher's Diploma were necessary for entry to the Unified Colonial Education Service.

It is our view that by demanding these qualifications for entry into the Education Officers' scale, the Commission is completely opposed to the Malayanisation of the Education Service since no facilities to obtain these qualifications exist in Malaya. It is significant that the Commission has attached little weight to the qualifications obtainable locally. (5)

The initial salaries of teachers were too low and should be raised to a higher level "as there is no doubt that the salary scales recommended by the Trusted Commission for the locally recruited teachers do not make possible the kind of life which teachers of quality required and be enabled to live as the salaries recommended do not bear a relationship to the earnings of other professions".⁶

Table showing the salary position of teachers in
comparison with other professional groups⁷

	Teachers Normal Trained	Teachers Raffles College Trained	Social Welfare Supervisors	Veterinary Officers	Dental Surgeons	Doctors
No. of years of specialised training	3	4	3	3	5	6
Initial Salary Present	\$130 (M) \$100 (W)	\$165 (M) \$135 (W)	-	\$200	\$200	\$250
Trusted Scale	\$150 (M) \$120 (W)	\$180 (M) \$144 (W)	\$320	\$320	\$520	\$520
Difference	\$20 (M) \$20 (W)	\$15 (M) \$9 (W)	-	\$120	\$320	\$270
Maximum Salary Present	\$300 (M) \$200 (W)	\$325 (M) \$225 (W)	-	\$450	\$500	\$600
Trusted Scale	\$345 (M) \$276 (W)	\$390 (M) \$312 (W)	\$500 (with chances for further promotion)	\$620 (with chances for further promotion)	\$900	\$900
Difference	\$45 (M) \$76 (W)	\$65 (M) \$87 (W)	-	\$270	\$400	\$300

The S.T.U. was of the view that the salary schemes in the education service should not give rise to any anomalies or injustice

within the teaching profession.

It is not just to recruit teachers with an Honours Degree of a British University and a recognised Teacher's Diploma (T.D.) on a salary scheme disproportionately higher than that of Raffles College graduates with the Post-graduate Diploma in Education, particularly when at the same time, a realistic relationship in the salaries is maintained between the Raffles College teachers and the Normal Class Trained.(8)

A major cause of discontent was that the professional qualifications obtainable in Singapore and the Federation of Malaya were not considered adequate for entry to the highest grades in the education service, i.e. the entry to the Unified Colonial Education Service.

M.T.U.'s Reaction

When the recommendations of the Trusted Commission were released, the M.T.U. protested in a most vehement manner. It dubbed it the Mis-Trusted Salaries Commission Report and called on all government employees to mistrust all such commissions in the future.

Class IV teachers (men) who appear in the Report as Probationers have had their salaries raised from the \$65-5A-75 scheme to the \$80-5A-90 scheme whereas women in the same category will receive no revision in their salaries.

The Commission has ignored the fact that these probationers, employed in large numbers, are now doing full time teaching. The Malayan Teachers' Union is of the opinion that they should press for a re-consideration of the scheme for teachers under all these categories.

Some of the graduates in the teaching profession who are on the maximum will, when the Revised Scheme comes into operation, be suffering a loss of \$5/- p.m. for the first year! A minus improvement!

Our biggest outcry, i.e. against the poor percentage gaining superscale appointments, remains untouched! The magnanimous inclusion of Superscale A in the same division as the Senior Service is a farce, on a par with giving the condemned convict a banquet before sending him to perdition!

A European teacher now takes 16 years to reach his maximum of \$900/- whereas an Asian teacher, fortunate enough to get into Division One earlier than is normally the case, would take 46

years to reach the same maximum, when he would, if he lived, be 67 years of age! But Government Regulations require him to retire at 55!

It appears as accepted by the Salaries Commission that teachers have no market value. (9)

There was cynicism expressed by the General Secretary, P.T.U., writing to the Straits Echo and Times of Malaya on the 23rd December, 1947. In the Report it was stated that the locally recruited officers could become Education Officers if they showed themselves fitted for the work but the General Secretary, P.T.U., was of the opinion that the Department of Education would try to find a thousand and one reasons why the locally recruited teacher was not fitted for the job. This was interpreted by H.R. Cheeseman, Director of Education, Malayan Union that "the Education Department was being publicly branded as capable of despicable conduct".¹⁰ It was a cause of great uneasiness for Cheeseman who said that his Department, which must act as the executive of the Government, was in fact a champion of all teachers. The General Secretary, P.T.U. assured him in a letter that "he did not intend his letter to be taken at face value" and that there was no antagonism between the teachers in Penang and the Department of Education.¹¹

In an attempt to educate public opinion and get the support of all the Advisory Councillors, the M.T.U. made an appeal - A Square Deal for the Teachers means a Square Deal for Children - by setting out its case for a unified education service. It also sought to dispel the view, held by the Chief Secretary,¹² that the M.T.U. considered the Honours degrees entirely superfluous. The marginal differences between the various qualifications, as suggested in the single professional scale for all qualified teachers, were considered by all the English teachers' unions just and realistic. What the M.T.U. feared was the

danger of making a shibboleth of Honours degrees and Diplomas in Education from British universities "so that only Europeans who have every advantage of acquiring these qualifications could retain a monopoly of the administrative jobs". The Trusted Commission put European Honours degree holders straight into the class of officers although there was no assurance that these graduates had administrative ability. There was no reason at all why the Raffles College Diploma with Postgraduate Training in Education should be regarded as inadequate in the circumstances obtaining in the Malayan Union and Singapore for the purpose of promotion to the highest posts in the education service.

Below is an extract of the M.T.U. appeal.¹³

Are you interested in your country? Would you like to see better citizens for the future Malaya? Are you anxious to make sure of a higher standard of education for the children of Malaya?

If your answer to each of these questions is in the affirmative then you may consider seriously giving your support to this appeal of the Malayan Teachers' Union for a square deal for teachers.

The Malayan Teachers' Union is convinced that the recommendations of the Trusted Commission will fail to attract the best talents among the Malayan youth to the Education Service. The best type of scholar will seek employment in other walks of life. The effect will be the deterioration of education in the country and it is the children who will ultimately suffer.

The Malayan Teachers' Union appeals to all Advisory Councillors and all the peoples of Malaya whose children's education is bound to be adversely affected by any sort of discrimination within the Education Service, to support strongly and unitedly our determined struggle for the introduction of a Unified Education Service in place of the present division of the service into a Junior Service for Asian teachers and a Senior Service for Europeans only. We now put before you a Scheme which we have sent to the appropriate authorities for consideration. We ask you to support this Scheme to the best of your ability.

The basic scale, which the M.T.U. recommended for all qualified teachers, European or locally recruited, was as follows:

Entry for Normal Trained	\$240
	\$260
	\$280
Entry for Graduates	\$300
	\$320
	\$340
	\$360
Entry for holders of Honours Degree + Teaching Diploma	\$380
	\$400
	\$420
Bar for all	<u>\$440</u>
	\$460
	\$490
	\$520
	\$550
	\$580
	\$610
	\$640
Bar for all	<u>\$670</u>
	\$720
	\$750
	\$780
	\$810
	\$840
	\$870
	\$900

Superscale

On the basis of equal pay for equal work, the M.T.U. asked that women teachers be paid the same salaries as men. Trainee teachers (probationers) had to do full-time teaching and the M.T.U. asked that they be paid the following scale: \$100 x 10 - 120. The M.T.U. believed that in all cases the basic scale offered better remuneration to the Education Officers in the Senior Service and slightly better remuneration for the Asian teachers of long standing service but the general prospects for Asian teachers would be better and "racial discrimination and anomalies will be wiped out in the education service".

The new salary proposals of the Trusted Commission "evoked a veritable storm of protests and criticism from individual officers, Heads of Departments, representative Associations of various branches of the service, many of which were able to speak with added strength through the medium of recently formed Trade Unions".¹⁴ The Government servants expected a substantive increase in salaries in order to cope with the cost of living which was "upwards of 300 per cent above the 1939 level".¹⁵ The Report was presented to the Legislative Councils in Singapore and the Federation of Malaya in March 1948; although the salary scales were to be put into retrospective effect from 1st August, 1947, each Legislative Council appointed a special committee to sit under a common chairman to consider "certain specified parts of the Report and in particular a selected list of salaries and salary scales which Government deemed it necessary to subject to further review".¹⁶

The Trusted Report was criticised by some members of the Singapore Advisory Council. In its public session on the 26th February, 1948, a member¹⁷ said he was greatly disturbed by the appallingly poor salaries paid to teachers compared to members of other professions in the public services. He then went on to talk about the possible effects of the proposed salary schemes for teachers as follows:

One of the aims or principles laid down by the Trusted Commission, Sir, is that the new salary schemes should attract the best possible local candidates in order to build up a more efficient service. But in respect of the teachers' scheme, unless it is revised, it will not only not attract the best possible local candidates but instead will make embittered people of those teachers who are already in the service. This would certainly be a tragedy.

If the men and the women who have the responsibility of training our children to be the future citizens of the New Malaya are people who have become bitter towards life, then all our dreams of a New Malaya with self-government and peace and harmony will

not be realised easily. In the interests of the future of this country, therefore, there must be a more equitable revision of the proposed Teachers' Salary Scheme.

Also, we have this year approved the Hon'ble the Director of Education's Ten Year Plan and his programme of free Primary education, with the building of more and more schools. But he too has told us of the difficulty of getting suitable men and women to staff our schools unless they can be paid better salaries. To adopt the proposed teachers' salary scheme without further revision, Sir, would be to undermine the whole Ten Year Plan.

Next, let us take the point made by a few people that teachers in most parts of the world are poorly paid and therefore they must also be poorly paid here. Well, Sir, let us look, and look carefully, at those parts of the world today - unhappy places where people cannot be restrained from quarrelling or fighting with one another because of ill-will and resentment between races, communities, and classes.

If we want Malaya to be different, then we want our children to be taught not by people who are embittered with life, but by men and women who will pass on to them goodness and goodwill, and a true sense of civic responsibility.

Interim Report of the Special Committee on Salaries

The Interim Report of the Special Committee on Salaries, appointed to look into the views of the Trusted Commission Report and to take into consideration public reaction, did not accept the principle of a unified education service, presented by the S.T.U. However in a press statement on the 21st June, 1948, the M.T.U. said that it was however gratified to note that the Special Committee had in its recommendations made concessions which if properly implemented could ultimately lead to unification. But the aim of the S.T.U. was still a unified education service.

The two considerations that influenced the Special Committee in formulating the salary structure for the Raffles College entrant were

1. the scales fixed in the Trusted Report for the State Civil Services and

2. the paramount importance for the present and immediate future advancement of Malaya of education and particularly of higher and secondary education. (18)

The cream of the Raffles College trained entrants would have to be competed for by the various branches of the public service. The Special Committee believed that "it would be sound policy and in the best interests of the country, if, after the civil services, inducements were held out to attract the best men into the Education Department".¹⁹ The inducements would be in the form of an attractive salary scale for English school teachers and prospects of advancement into the Education Officers' Scheme.

The Special Committee recommended "a very substantial scale of increases"²⁰ of salary to school teachers, particularly to English school teachers. Raffles College trained teachers (men) advanced from an unrevised scale of \$130/- p.m. rising by increments to \$300/- p.m. to the following scale: \$250 - \$580. Normal trained teachers (men) advanced from an unrevised scale of \$130/- rising by increments to \$300/- p.m. to the following scale: \$200 - \$545. Parallel increases were given to women teachers. But they still fell short of the scale required as it did not bear a relationship to the cost of living and the earnings of the other professions.

The Special Committee pointed out that the salary scales for English teachers (whether Raffles College Trained or Normal Class Trained) in the Trusted Commission Report were divided into (a) a time scale and (b) a superscale grade. The Special Committee recommended the abolition of all superscale posts ('A' and 'B', 'C' and 'D'), a measure not favoured by the Directors of Education of the Federation of Malaya and Singapore. Since they were open to every efficient

teacher and not limited to a certain percentage of officers on the time scale, the Special Committee saw no point in retaining the superscale as a separate grade and has, therefore embodied it in the time scale".²¹ The existing superscale "A" teachers, the Special Committee noted with satisfaction, would be promoted to the Education Officers' service (a recommendation by the Directors of Education) hitherto open only to officers in the Unified Colonial Education Service, staffed only by Europeans. The Special Committee endorsed the views of the Trusted Report thus:

We think that it should be made possible for locally trained teachers to become Education Officers if they show themselves fitted for the work. We have accordingly recommended only one superscale grade above the time scale for teachers of English and we suggest that in future further promotion should be to the grade of Education Officer. (22)

Superscale "A" teachers would be promoted to the Education Officers' grade. A recommendation that satisfied the teachers was that while the door should be opened as widely as possible for the entry of locally recruited teachers to the Education Officers' grade, the best possible use should at the same time be made "of the specialist teaching qualifications of certain officers already serving as Education Officers, the prevalent policy governing the employment of such officers should be altered" in the way shown by the resolution of the Special Committee.

We are of the opinion that the Education Officers' service should be reclassified as to their duties so that personnel recruited for their academic and scientific qualifications would not expect as a matter of course to be placed in the administrative branch of the service. Furthermore, the policy of recruiting Honours Degree graduates with the Teachers' Diploma for the special purpose of placing them in the administrative branch of the service after a short period of teaching appears to be unsound as it will deprive the country of the special service which these officers can give by reason of their qualifications. (23)

The Singapore Legislative Council accepted the recommendations of the Special Committee in its entirety.

The Special Committee felt that their recommendations were "generous" for the English school teachers. The reasons, as stated by the Cowgill Report,²⁴ had to do with the widely held belief that in the present stage of development in Malaya, the most promising line of advance towards the realisation of legitimate aspirations lay in the provision of wider opportunities in the field of education and that an important step in this was the raising of the status and prospects of school teachers. A new conception of the position of the school teacher in the hierarchy of the public service was introduced; revised salaries should produce better material and greater contentment and pave the way for the higher level of training and of performance which alone could justify the new level of salary and of status which was attendant upon it.

The Special Committee stressed the special position of education and of teachers and any comparison made by other branches of the public service with regard to "substantial" increases of the teachers' salaries, complete with arguments based on the old and long-standing relationship between teachers and the other grades in the public service was not to be entertained.

To such pleas it has been necessary to turn a deaf ear. It will have to be made clear that the new conception of the position of education in the new Malaya invalidates the old comparisons and that consideration of claims for revision of salary in other services must be viewed by other standards and with strict reference to the intrinsic merits of each case. (25)

The vital role of education in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore was appreciated by the Special Committee and the Cowgill

Commission. However the scheme they recommended and approved did not "unify" the education service in any way but continued to perpetuate the discriminations in the service.

At one time, there was only one superscale above the time scale, (viz., \$300 to \$400). At a later date, it was split into 2 for men ('A' and 'B') and 2 for women ('C' and 'D'). The M.T.U. suggested²⁶ that the present superscales 'A' and 'B' and 'C' and 'D' be amalgamated into one superscale as it had existed before. This would enable all superscale officers to enter the Education Officers' Scheme. Under the Special Committee's Scheme, teachers on superscales 'A' and 'C' would be Education Officers. The M.T.U.'s contention was that teachers on superscales 'B' and 'D' should be accorded the same status because that was the only way that these men and women would not lose seniority. If the principle of years of recognised qualified service was considered, there would be several teachers who would be on the maximum of the new scale.

Teachers were first selected to superscale 'B' and then selected again for superscale 'A'. Both holders of the superscale posts held the same qualifications but the superscale 'B' officers had to go through a second 'sieving'. (In the Special Committee's scheme, superscales 'B' and 'D' merged into the time scale and superscales 'A' and 'C' would go on the new scale - men: \$400 - 30A - 670/Bar/720 - 30A - 900 (15 years); - women: \$320 - 25A - 545/Bar/570 - 25A - 720 (15 years).

The M.T.U. queried the restriction of the Education Officers' posts to 5% of the teachers. According to the M.T.U. there were then only some 70 posts for Education Officers.²⁷ The M.T.U.'s point was to bring to attention the particular reference to the unanimous decision

of the Special Committee on the need for the re-classification of the Education Officers' scheme; re-classification would create more posts for Education Officers since the principle for promotion of the locally recruited teachers had been accepted. Only Europeans had been eligible for the Education Officers' scheme and 70 of the posts were competed for by 120 Europeans. The M.T.U. felt that if its proposal was accepted, more than 2000 teachers would be eligible for promotion.

And in this connection, the M.T.U. pointed out that with the creation of the P.S.C., as recommended by the Trusted Commission, the P.S.C. would be able to consider recruitment of specialists with the necessary qualifications and the promotion to the Education Officers' scheme. It would ensure justice and fair play as contrasted to what the M.T.U. described as "the long abused system of superscales for locally recruited teachers".²⁸

The Director of Education in an interview²⁹ with the J.T.U. representatives on the matter of the Johore Special Grade on 15th September 1948 said that the minimum qualification of teachers in superscale A were the Cambridge Senior Certificate and the Senior Normal Certificate. And the reason given by him for being prepared to recommend only half the number of teachers in the Johore Special Grade for promotion to be Education Officers was that some of the officers had barely completed their secondary education although the Cowgill Commission on the Revision of Salaries recommended that the members of the Johore Special Grade were eligible for the posts of Education Officers (Division I). It was the view of the Director of Education that care should be taken to maintain a high standard among the Education Officers. If it were known that teachers without sufficient

qualifications were allowed Principalships and Inspectorships, it would be difficult to recruit men of high qualifications.

The official policy of recruiting only Honours graduates with a teaching qualification into the Education Officers' Scheme was obvious in the post-war period. At the interview³⁰ called by the Joint Salaries Commission Officer, A.V. Cowgill, the following discussion took place:

Cowgill: Have you no sufficient pride to maintain the standard of the officers' grade? Is it the object of the Union to flood the E.O. appointments with those who have no qualifications?

Yapp (S.T.U.): Are not experienced teachers in superscale 'B' better than new recruits from England in spite of their Honours degrees?

Cowgill: The answer is No but academic qualifications count.

Yapp: Academic qualifications count only to a certain extent. Experience must be considered.

Cowgill: It certainly would not be in accordance with the declared policy to promote to E.O. scale those who haven't got the Honours degrees. There is no racial discrimination at all.

The M.T.U. was prepared to accept the Special Committee's recommendations as an interim scheme in view of the financial situation although it had been vigorously pressing for the unification of the education service and would continue to do so.

Conversion

The unfair feature of the new salary scales, as the M.T.U. saw it, was the unduly long time scale and the conversion scheme worked out by the Director of Education contained numerous anomalies.

What the M.T.U. members were most concerned^{about} at the time was the conversion from the old salary scale to the new scale which was made retrospective from 1st August 1947. The time scale was described as

unique from the point of view that it was extended to one of 26 years for Normal Trained (men and women) and 25 and 24 for Raffles College Trained (men and women respectively). The old time scale was as follows:-
Normal Trained Men: 130 - 10A - 250/Bar/10A - 300 (17 years). Normal Trained Women: 110 - 10A - 160/Bar/10A - 200 (10 years). The old time scale for Raffles College Trained Men: 140 - 10A - 250/Bar/10A - 300 (16 years). (In addition, a graduate's monthly allowance of \$25 or \$50 was paid for both men and women). Raffles College Trained Women: \$110 - 10A - 160/Bar/10A - 200 (10 years).

The disparity would become more glaring when it was observed that European teachers, enjoying the education officers' scale reached their maximum of the time scale in only 15 years after entry into the service and their new time scale was shorter than the old. Their new scale (men): \$400 - 30A - 670/Bar/720 - 30A - 900 (15 years). Their old scale (men): 320 - 20A - 640 (16 years).

Conversion into the new scheme meant an increment, with a maximum of 4 further increments for those who had been stagnating at the maximum of the old scale for more than 4 years. Such a principle would not be equitable especially for women teachers whose old time scale of 10 years would now become one of 26 years. All women teachers at the maximum, irrespective of their years of stagnation at the maximum, would be not more than half way up in the new scale of salaries.

A teacher whose incremental date was say 1st June but who might have had 12 years' stagnation at the maximum would become junior to a teacher whose incremental date was 1st April but who might have stagnated only 6 years at the maximum. And a big number of teachers was involved in this arbitrary method of fixing conversion points.

Among the locally recruited teachers more than 52% of men and 48% of women have stagnated at the maximum of the old scales for various periods ranging from 5 to 15 (and some even 18) years. (31)

Many of the women teachers could not reach the recommended maximum even though their age permitted them to continue to serve the Education Department for a further 10 to 12 years. Even under normal circumstances women teachers, if they should choose to exercise the option of retiring at the age of 45, as allowed by the Government, could not enjoy the maximum of the new time scale.

An incongruous situation is thus created, whereby a person is unable to draw the maximum salary on retirement. We feel that it is undesirable in the best interests of the service for teachers to be faced with such a situation. (32)

The conversion table was formulated in such a manner that the terms of transfer for serving officers would be such that irrespective of years of service or stagnation at the maximum in the old scale, no teacher should be permitted to cross the second efficiency bar (in the case of men) and the first efficiency bar (in the case of women) on transfer into the new scheme. The efficiency bars in the old scale were considered irrelevant.

The anomalies created by the terms of transfer were the result of the extended time scale and they were so numerous and unsatisfactory that it seemed impossible to remedy them unless the time scale was shortened. The M.T.U. suggested reducing the length of the time scale for teachers to one of 19 years for Normal Class Trained, 16 years for Raffles College Trained.³³

Once that was done, the M.T.U. suggested that some of the next steps³⁴ would be:

1. to place men and women teachers on the same salary scale.

2. to allow conversion to be made on the principle of an increment for every year of service for men.
3. to promote superscale 'B' and 'D' holders to the Education Officers' posts.
(The reasons given for the suggested promotion were that the Government had already recognised their 'meritorious' service and 'reducing them to the time scales' was a tacit way of refusing them recognition for their services and denying them the opportunity of discharging their responsibilities. 'Down-grading them - since downgrading takes place only in posts held by Asian teachers - was contrary to the declared principles of His Majesty's Government because it was felt to be a matter of racial discrimination').
4. to place all graduates of Indian universities on the graduate scale of salaries.
(Some graduates of Madras University received graduate allowances and some did not).
5. to restore the two increments which some teachers lost on transfer from government aided schools to government schools.
6. to restore the lost increments of teachers who were retrenched during the slump years and who were re-employed either at the initial salary or at the highest drawn salary before such retrenchment took place.
7. to allow increments (in the form of one increment for every 3 years after the maximum) for long service as a measure of relief for teachers at the maximum since vacancies for the Education Officers' posts would be few and far between.

Benham Report

The Benham Committee on salaries was appointed by resolution of the Singapore Legislative Council on the 28th July, 1949. The Conference, which replaced the M.T.U. as the central organisation of the teachers' unions after the 8th July, 1949, sent to the Committee all the objections it had concerning the salary structure for teachers based on the Report of the Special Committee (1948) and the conversion scheme. The Benham Report for Singapore, published on the 25th April, 1950, was severely criticised by all Divisions, except Division I, of the civil service. It recommended substantial increases for European officers and Division I

employees; the Honours men, European or Asian, in the education service were to be put on the same time scale of \$410 to \$1,000 for the first time. However it cut \$100/- on the time scale ceiling for Normal Trained teachers (men and women) and \$65/- and \$80/- on the time scale ceiling for women and men graduate (pass degree or Raffles College) teachers respectively. The Benham Committee justified the recommendations for the English school teachers as follows:

We feel that the salary scales at present in force for teachers in English schools, both Graduates and Normal Class trained, have too high a maximum in relation to the other grades of the Public Service. (35)

Unlike the Cowgill Commission which seemed, at least to the P.T.U.,³⁶ to be guided by principles which would ensure that the task of educating the children lay in the hands of the best qualified teachers in a country moving towards self-government, the Benham Committee based its recommendations on solely financial grounds. The Benham Committee reduced the maxima on the time scales for the various categories of English school teachers for no other reason than to appease the agitation of other branches in the public service which considered that by comparison with the teachers they had been badly treated.

From the point of view of the M.T.U., the Benham recommendations contradicted the expressed aim of the colonial government, as contained in White Paper No. 197 which stressed among other things its policy of training locally recruited personnel to fill the higher posts occupied now by Europeans. The P.T.U. in rejecting the recommendations for the Education Department in the Benham Report, stated that every departure from the Cowgill scheme that was recommended by the Benham Committee was a retrograde step, taking the teachers further away from a unified education service.

By partially bridging the immense gap in status between the locally trained teacher and the European education officer and by opening the door for promotion to the Education Officers' grade for the locally trained teacher, the Cowgill Commission took a step towards Unification of the service. But the good they have done will be entirely nullified by the adoption of the Benham Report. (37)

The Benham Report for the Federation of Malaya was only released on 22nd September, 1950. Its recommendations were similar to the recommendations for teachers in Singapore. A deep sense of disillusionment and indignation gripped the teachers. This happened at a time when their parent body, the Conference of Delegates of Teachers' Unions, had no legal status; it was sheer determination on the part of some of the leaders that some semblance of a parent body existed. The redoubtable Kanthaswamy cabled all the teachers' unions to hold protest meetings against the Benham recommendations in Singapore and the Federation of Malaya and to continue pressing for the adoption of a unified education service. It was considered that such an action taken by all the teachers' unions simultaneously would help them a great deal in their agitation for a unified education service.

What did the Report do? In a most lengthy resolution³⁸ adopted at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the K.T.U. on 6th October, 1950, the General Secretary, K.T.U., said, among other things, that the Benham Report

has planted 3 trees up which the Normal-Trained Teachers, the Graduate and the Expatriate are to climb. The tree for the Normal Trained Teacher is stunted, old and full of many withering branches and at the top there are a few fruits and these fruits match the tree; they are bitter and unwholesome and may fill the minds of those eating them with bitterness and frustration. The tree for the Expatriate is strong and well-grown, full of rosy luscious fruits even from the lowest boughs and those eating them have a sense of well-being and contentment. Is this fair and equitable? 3 different and very unequal plants for people who do the same work? Certainly not. We want one plant up which the Normal-Trained, the Graduate and the Expatriate can climb and

reach the top and enjoy the fruits thereof. We - for the labourer is worthy of his hire - want a UNIFIED EDUCATION SERVICE.

Coupled with the unconditional rejection of the Benham recommendations, the teachers' unions also voiced their resentment in another resolution³⁹ against the gross discrimination in treatment against aided school teachers in the Federation of Malaya who were not given Housing Allowance (whereas aided school teachers in Singapore had received as from 1st July, 1950) and other conditions of service in government service, viz., pensions, medical benefits, and "perks", like government holiday bungalows, which were denied the aided school teachers.

At the Conference of Delegates of Teachers' Unions held in Kuala Lumpur on the 21st August, 1950 the Memorandum on the Unification of the Education Service Part II presented by the S.T.U. received support.

The S.T.U. was requested by the Colonial Secretary to submit detailed proposals for a basic salary scale for all qualified teachers in Singapore English schools and this the S.T.U. did on the 31st August, 1950. Since the publication of the Benham Report for Singapore in April, 1950, the S.T.U. had had discussions with the Director of Education and the Commissioner of Labour on the 31st May and the 7th June, 1950 and it was revealed that the Normal Training Certificate issued by the Malayan and Singapore Education Departments could not be recognised in the United Kingdom and therefore was the most important factor that stood in the way of a unified education service. There were certain suggestions which the S.T.U. made but which were disputed at the Conference on the 21st August 1950 - on the Post-Normal Course and on the fixing of salaries - but the S.T.U.'s proposals were carried.⁴⁰

The Pan-Malayan Council of the Stamford Club had petitioned previous salaries commissions on behalf of graduates in the Welfare and other organisations in the public service, as well as in the education service, since 1948. The P.T.U., T.U.P. and the T.U.M. were in favour of accommodating the claims of the Pan-Malayan Council but the stage had been reached when agreement between the Conference and the Pan-Malayan Council was impossible; in its memorandum, the Pan-Malayan Council had dissociated itself from the proposals made by the teachers' unions and further stated that the basic minimum qualification required for entry into the education service was an Honours degree; it was later to delete this condition. Devan Nair (S.T.U.) made the comment that the Pan-Malayan Council was asking the government for direct negotiations for an "un-unified service".

Signs of weakening over the principles of unification of the education service could be seen.⁴¹ The basic salary scale, proposed by the S.T.U. for all qualified teachers, whether men or women, was as follows: \$260 x 20 ... \$740. The Honours degree holder would be placed on the segment, whose initial was \$380 and maximum \$740. This was in fact a downward revision as the basic time scale recommended for the Honours graduate teacher by the Benham Committee was \$410 - \$1000, the time scale enjoyed by members of the Malayan Civil Service, the Colonial Legal Service and the Medical Service. The U.S.T. at the Conference believed that a separate scale for the Honours graduate teachers should be suggested as that proposed by the S.T.U. was unrealistic. It proposed the basic time scale of \$400 - \$1,000. The T.U.P. was in agreement. Chan Chiew Kim (S.T.U.) then pointed out that the essence of unification would be lost by having inflated salaries for one section of teachers. It was taking the Conference further away

from the unified service because of the inflated scales recommended for Honours degree holders. The T.U.P. representative then described the S.T.U. memorandum on the unification of the Education Service Part II as "a brick wall". Yap Choon Kong (P.T.U.) and Devan Nair then explained at length the principles and the importance of 'unification' - the end of discrimination and the incentive for progress of individual teachers, the eligibility of every teacher for promotion to the higher posts, the new posts called for in a unified service and, what was of relevance to the discussion was that the fixing of the salary of a teacher with a Honours degree should have a proper relationship with one holding say a General Degree or a Normal Training Certificate.

The P.U.T. proposed and the J.T.U. seconded the proposal that the Conference should draw up the Unification Memorandum Part II for the Federation of Malaya, based on the S.T.U. memorandum. 7 voted for, 1 (P.T.U.) against and 1 (U.S.T.) abstained. The S.T.U., the P.T.U. and the T.U.M. were to be responsible for drafting the memorandum to be submitted to the Conference in February, 1951.

The August Conference made the S.T.U. leaders realise that the meaning of unification was not clearly understood. Devan Nair, general secretary of the S.T.U., wrote to Kanthaswamy about publishing a pamphlet on unification of the education service in all its respects "for the enlightenment of all teachers in the country".⁴² But the pamphlet could not be produced because of objections to the Post-Normal and amendments made to the salary scales in the S.T.U. draft by the U.S.T. And in the meantime, events were moving fast.

The Extraordinary General Meeting of the S.T.U. on the 7th October, 1950 had a unique significance. As a follow-up to a decision made

at the Conference of Delegates from all the teachers' unions in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore on the 21st August, 1950, teachers in all the States and in Singapore held extraordinary general meetings to take action on the conditions of service of aided school teachers, reject the Benham Report and press for the immediate establishment of a unified education service. At these meetings, the teachers also presented a united front for the purpose of improving conditions of service of aided school teachers to bring them in line with their colleagues in the Government schools as a step towards the attainment of a unified service. The teachers supported the 2 memoranda submitted by the S.T.U. on the unification of the education service thus enabling the Conference to carry on the struggle for the teachers' cause on a pan-Malayan basis. Devan Nair in Singapore read out the Petition dealing with the conditions of service of aided school teachers and there was overwhelming support; the same petition was read at all the extraordinary general meetings of all the teachers' unions on that night.

However there was a breakdown of accepted procedure agreed upon by the Conference members in industrial relations. K.V. Thaver, pro tem Secretary of the P.M.T.U. wrote on the 5th October, 1950, to all the general secretaries of the teachers' unions asking each of them to write to the Chief Secretary requesting him to postpone consideration of the Benham Report to a date, later than the 23rd October, 1950, when the Federal Legislative Council would sit. According to him, "important members" who sympathised with the teachers would not be present and those who would be present would support the Government as they hoped to be nominated again the next year.⁴³ The U.S.T. wrote on the 9th October, 1950, to the Chief Secretary seeking his "goodwill for staying

discussion on this all-important question till we are able to submit a memorandum to elucidate our common stand for the unification of the Malayan Education service".⁴⁴ The P.T.U. also wrote on its own to the Chief Secretary requesting that the Benham recommendations in so far as they concerned teachers in English schools be referred to a select committee.

The progress of the Federation of Malaya is linked up with its education problems which abound with complexities and since the future of education is very closely bound to the people directly responsible for its welfare, it is not only essential but vital that a Select Committee be formed to review the Benham Report in so far as it concerns teachers in English. (45)

These 2 unions acted on their own. Devan Nair suggested that the "correct" procedure was for each union to send to the Secretary of the Conference a resolution rejecting the Benham recommendations and request for a Pan-Malayan negotiating committee to be appointed. He would then forward their joint request to the Chief Secretary on behalf of all the unions in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore. Only in that way could the unions achieve a unanimous stand.

On the 2nd November, 1950, Kanthaswamy wrote to the Chief Secretary, Federation of Malaya and the Colonial Secretary, Singapore, stating that all the teachers' unions rejected the Benham recommendations; he requested the establishment of a Committee to discuss the detailed proposals of a single basic salary structure for a unified education service. The Select Committee for Schemes of Service (Higher Services) in Singapore had already received representations from the S.T.U. on the question of a unified education service.

On the 14th November, 1950, Kanthaswamy made an application⁴⁶ on behalf of the Conference for the right to negotiate on salary scales for teachers. The grounds⁴⁷ in support of its claim to recognition

were as follows :-

	No. of teachers in the service eligible for membership	Present membership of teachers in the education service
1. Penang Teachers' Union (P.T.U.)	419	299
2. Teachers Union of Perak (T.U.P.)	599	376
3. Union of Selangor Teachers (U.S.T.)	457	283
4. Negri Sembilan Teachers' Union (N.S.T.U.)	173	136
5. Teachers' Union of Malacca (T.U.M.)	148	122
6. Johore Teachers' Union (J.T.U.)	235	212
7. Singapore Teachers' Union (S.T.U.)	1041	851
8. Pahang Union of Teachers (P.U.T.)	105	86
9. Kelantan Teachers' Union (K.T.U.)	32	32

It was the contention of the Conference that all the appointments as obtained in Schedule IV of the Benham Committee Report in Divisions I, II and III would fall within the scope of the negotiation. But the Chief Secretary, in its reply to the Conference Secretary, made it clear that senior officers in Division I of the Education Department were to be excluded from negotiation; Division I posts were to remain the preserve of an intellectual caste, untainted as far as possible, by any infusion of Asians into its ranks. Besides appointments to such posts were only made by the Director of Recruitment, acting for the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in London.

The Conference represented the only body to negotiate on behalf of all teachers but the Chief Secretary indicated that there was a separate claim on behalf of Raffles College Trained teachers made by the Pan-Malayan Council of the Stamford Club; the P.T.U. and the Kedah

Teachers' Association had also put up separate claims for negotiation. The P.T.U. stated at the Conference held in Penang in December, 1950 that it would inform the Chief Secretary that it wished to withdraw its application for negotiation as it was being represented by the Conference. The Conference members saw that the Kedah Teachers' Association was only interested in getting a place on the negotiating team and was not prepared to join the Conference on other matters. The Conference delegates decided that it should be ignored. Agreement with the Pan-Malayan Council was not possible; the attitude of the Conference delegates was that the Conference existed to serve the interests of the teaching profession as a whole and not any particular section of teachers, irrespective of qualifications. The crux of the problem, as pointed out by a P.T.U. representative, was the fear of the graduate teachers (who were incomparably smaller in number in the teachers' unions) that their interests would not be adequately represented. The fact was that the Conference at that time was adequately representative of the locally recruited staff.

On the 19th December, 1950 the Select Committee for the Education Service tabled Paper 103 in the Singapore Legislative Council. This was a period of intense activity for the Singapore teachers. Although some of the general principles of unification were accepted, the Normal trained teachers, who formed the basic core of the education service, were excluded from the unified education service. The S.T.U. now felt that immediate steps should be taken to obtain recognition of the Normal Training qualification. This was the start of the campaign to press for recognition of the Normal Training Certificate as the basic professional qualification for teachers in Singapore. The Normal Training Issue was seen as a Pan-Malayan issue. Action was taken by all the teachers'

unions on 2 resolutions adopted by the Conference⁴⁸ in Penang in December, 1950 as follows:-

1. That all Teachers' Unions in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore should jointly submit a memorandum signed by all qualified teachers to both Governments, demanding recognition of the Normal Class qualification as the basic qualification for entry into the Unified Education service recommended by the Teachers' Unions, Federation of Malaya and Singapore.
2. That a memorandum signed by all probationary teachers in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore be sent to both Governments, demanding that the Normal Class qualification which they are being trained for, should be the acceptable basic qualification for entry into the Unified Education Service and that the memorandum from trainees in Singapore should also ask for a single type of basic training to replace the present divisions in the basic training.

But events in 1951 caused the S.T.U. to disengage itself from the activities of the teachers' unions in the Federation of Malaya. On the 8th January, 1951, Sarma and Devan Nair, among others, were arrested and detained without trial by the Colonial Government in Singapore. There was no doubt that the arrests set back the development of teachers' unions. The leadership of the Conference passed to the P.T.U. The Conference now sought the registration of the M.T.U. without the inclusion of the S.T.U. and did not encounter any official objections. The S.T.U. did not send any of its representatives to the Conference or the inaugural meeting of the M.T.U. in December, 1951. The M.T.U. developed on its own, without the firm guiding hand of Sarma but its past association with the S.T.U., to whom it owed its origin, has helped to shape its development. 1951 saw the end of the Pan-Malayan phase of the S.T.U. The Graduate Teachers' Association was formed in Singapore on the 7th September, 1951; this body which rejected the principles of unification of the education service was out to gain everything for the graduates without really considering the interests of members of the S.T.U.

CHAPTER 8

THE S.T.U. AND THE UNIFIED EDUCATION SERVICE

White Paper No. 69

The categorical rejection of the Benham recommendations by the S.T.U. was followed immediately by a vigorous campaign for the acceptance of a unified service as proposed by the Union. The Report of the Select Committee on the White Paper on Recruitment No. 69 of 1949 was seen as a great stumbling block. It recommended a "Unified Colonial Education Service" and recruitment into it was through the Colonial Office and as far as possible restricted to Europeans. There was also to be a Local Education Service and recruitment into it would be confined to graduates from Raffles College and the University of Malaya. To be made permanent, locally recruited graduates would have to have a knowledge of a vernacular language, other than their own mother-tongue. The Local Education Service was to be the intermediate scheme of service and the locally recruited graduates should be encouraged to seek entry into the Unified Colonial Education Service if they had the requisite qualifications or by promotion.

Normal trained teachers were not to be admitted to the Local Education Service. White Paper No. 69¹ stated:

The service is entirely separate from the Colonial Education Service and the service of Teachers in English Schools Normal Class trained (Revised Salary Schemes, 1st August, 1947).

To the S.T.U., the recruitment policy implied that Normal trained teachers would be barred from the higher posts; it also sought to create a separate service for Honours graduates as the elite in the teaching service.

We cannot escape the conclusion that it will ultimately lead to a situation similar to that obtaining in the Federal Service in this country in which although there is apparent unification, in practice there continues the same pre-war structure of "superior" and "inferior" classes of officers.(2)

It also separated those teachers who held the Honours degrees from those holding the General degrees. The University of Malaya (in Singapore) had a policy of restricting the number of graduates who might proceed to read for an Honours degree; this selective policy cut down the number of graduates who could proceed to the Honours course. Colonial policy was to groom the Honours degree graduates, not to raise the standard of education in the secondary schools but to become administrators; this policy³ was given expression in the Trusted Commission Report 1947 where it was mentioned that teachers recruited in the Education Officers' Grade were expected after a short period of ordinary teaching to gain experience of local conditions to assume the responsibilities of principalships or the Inspectorate of Schools.

The implication is that a man who may be an excellent scholar or a research scholar will at any rate command a premium though his capabilities may have little to do with his advancement as a teacher or administrator; on the other hand one who may not have obtained such high academic honours is penalised although one may have in the course of one's career, through experience and devotion to one's profession, acquired much skill in teaching, organising and administration.(4)

Normal trained teachers under the terms of the White Paper No. 69 were separated from the U.C.E.S. and the Local Education Service. No specific provisions were made for the Normal trained teachers to advance in the service from assistant teachers to the more responsible

posts which were now open only to those in the Education Officers' Grade. Until 1947, the Normal Trained teacher and the Raffles College Trained teacher were both classified as Class I teachers and in the case of women, they were classified as Class II teachers. It was therefore ironical that the Government should choose to say that the section of teachers who happened to be in the majority were not qualified for direct entry into the education service when they pressed for a unified education service.

The institution of the 2-year full-time Certificate course in the Teachers' Training College in 1950 would not invalidate the basic qualification for the education service. In the view of the S.T.U., the Certificate course would provide an alternative and parallel basic qualification for admission to the education service.

Through a strong plea by the S.T.U., the Governor agreed to withdraw "Education Service" (Chapter 7) from the White Paper No. 69 in May, 1950.⁵ However the official thinking remained unchanged and impervious to ideas which would bring changes and improvement to the education service.

There was another major grievance with regard to the salaries of the Officers' Grade (or Division I Officers) as fixed by the Benham Committee. The S.T.U. said that these salaries were fixed without having any proper relationship to the other employees in the service - and were fixed on the assumption that largely European officers would be appointed in the Grades.

Hence in one professional service, such as the teaching service, the salaries of the locally recruited Normal Trained teachers are entirely unrelated to the salaries of teachers who may be employed in the higher posts. (6)

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the S.T.U. was called on the 6th May, 1950. The meeting categorically rejected the Benham Report because it reversed the principles enunciated in Colonial White Paper No. 197 and expressed its determination to press for a unified education service as recommended by the S.T.U. A unanimous decision was also reached that the Committee should conduct a secret Ballot to find out whether members of the S.T.U. would consider a strike if conciliation methods failed.⁷

At another Extraordinary General Meeting called on the 16th May, 1950, Scharenguivel, President of the S.T.U., told⁸ the teachers that the Singapore Government was in fact 'brushing aside all S.T.U. representatives' while at the same time the Union was informed that Government was considering their case for a unified education service. With regard to the aided school teachers, the action taken by the Government was tantamount to summary dismissal of the rights of aided school teachers; aided school principals had been asked to prepare pay sheets as from 1st July 1950, in accordance with the Benham Salary Scheme which was then being reconsidered by Select Committee on Colonial Schemes of Higher Services. As far as the President knew, the Committee had only one preliminary meeting. He was also given to understand that the S.T.U. would shortly be invited to appear before that Committee.

On the 20th June, 1950, when the Benham proposals for teachers' salaries were considered by the Singapore Legislative Council, the Colonial Secretary said:

The Schemes of Service for the Education Service were at the last meeting of the Council withdrawn for further consideration and the salaries now proposed for teachers are approved without prejudice to any revision which may be required for their schemes when they are ready for adoption. (9)

The Benham scales were approved subject to the assurance given by the Colonial Secretary.

The meeting with the Select Committee was expected to take place soon. As it turned out it took place sooner than was expected and there was no time for the S.T.U. Management Committee to get the approval of the basic salary scale for all categories of teachers from the Conference of Delegates. At the Emergency Committee Meeting of the S.T.U. on the 31st July, 1950, there was a heated discussion about whether the scale for Graduates (Pass and Honours degree) should be upgraded.

The Emergency Committee Meeting of the S.T.U. was lengthy and sometimes acrimonious.¹⁰ It was finally decided that the S.T.U. should put forward what it considered an improved salary scale for graduate teachers. The approved salary scale was as follows:

1. Basic Salary - Normal Trained teachers
\$260 x \$20 ... \$600 (without bars)
2. Graduates of Raffles College and graduates holding Pass Degrees of any university should be given 4 additional increments in the minimum and maximum of the basic scale:
\$340 x \$20 ... \$680 (without any bars)
3. Graduates holding Honours degrees should be given 2 additional increments in the minimum and maximum of the basic scale:
\$380 x \$20 ... \$740 (without any bars).

The Committee agreed that the recommendation of 4 additional increments in the minimum and maximum of the basic scale for graduate teachers should be made because of the additional years taken for their academic course before their entry to the teaching service. Before the war, the practice was to give an additional increment to the graduate who had undergone the Postgraduate Course in Education at

Raffles College; this was in addition to the allowance for the Raffles College Diploma.

The basic time scale (\$260 x \$20 - \$600) for the Normal trained was not fixed at random. The S.T.U. worked out "statistics to prove a 500% increase in cost of living since pre-war days" and examining the frequency of the increases of price of conventional commodities, it felt that the cost of living could not be stabilised at anything less than 2 times that of pre-war. The pre-war basic scale of \$130 x \$10 - \$300 would not bear a proper relationship to the increase in cost of living hence the recommended scale. It also preserved uniform \$20 increments throughout the time-scale. "In doing this, we base our recommendations on the principles that might have influenced the Burnham Committee in the United Kingdom that increments are given for the work done and increasing personal responsibilities and not for paper qualifications".¹¹

Education Officers.

The S.T.U., like all the other teachers' unions in the Federation of Malaya, was not in favour of the policy of reserving the higher posts in the education service for Education Officers. Such a policy, stated the S.T.U., would deprive the community of talents that might be found elsewhere in the education service, while the limitation of competition within this small class of officers weakened incentive and would lead to intellectual stagnation.¹²

The S.T.U. maintained that the system obtaining in the University of Malaya (in Singapore), where the Honours degree could only be obtained by Postgraduate work, was "not in accordance with accepted practice" - i.e. in the universities in the U.K., a B.A. or B.Sc. (General) or a B.A. (Hons.) (Spec.) or B.Sc. (Spec.) may both be first

degrees and "any graduate who obtains a first or second class in the General Degree examinations has equal status with another who obtains a first or second class in the Honours or Special degree examinations".¹³ General degree holders and graduates with 'special' degrees were not eligible for the posts of Education Officers. But a degree, whether Honours or General, with third class Honours was deemed a Pass Degree by the Burnham Committee. The Director of Recruitment, acting for the Secretary of State for the Colonies, recruited before and after the war officers with General degrees and there were instances of those recruited without any University degree. In other words, the Benham Committee had demanded qualifications which had not been demanded either in form or practice by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The principle used by the Benham Committee for fixing the initial salary was that it should be related to the minimum entrance qualification required in the grade, the kind of work to be done and the length and type of training required during the initial probationary period.¹⁴ But by creating 2 differential scales in the same service, 1 two times more than the other for basically similar qualifications, the Benham Special Committee destroyed its own principle.

Grades for which the Pass Degree (University of Malaya) or the Diploma of Raffles College was the minimum qualification.	)	Initial salary \$210 Maximum time scale \$500.
Grades for which the Honours Degree was the minimum qualification	)	Initial salary \$410 Maximum time scale \$1,000.

It was precisely on the question of salaries that some graduates broke away from the S.T.U. and had their case represented by the Pan-Malayan Council of the Stamford Club which took up the case of the Raffles College graduates from 1948 to 1951. The S.T.U. was accused of

not giving adequate recognition to Honours degree graduates. The stand of the S.T.U. was that unification protected the interests of all grades of teachers in the service as it would assure everyone the chance of rising to the higher posts in the service. However, it was firm in its conviction that only marginal differences should be provided for additional qualifications.

Sarma wrote to the President of the Pan-Malayan Council of the Stamford Club thus:

You will agree that this principle is the only just foundation upon which a fair and correct salary structure can be built. If graduates think that government cannot be made to lower the \$410 basic salary for the Honours Degree holder, then it is only fair that the basic salaries of the General Degree holder or the Raffles College Diploma holder should bear an equitable marginal relationship with the basic of the Honours Degree holder. However, as teachers interested in the Malayanisation of the Education service, we cannot be expected to recommend the basic salary of the Honours Degree holder should be \$410, which is simply the salary meant to attract expatriate officers. It would also be well to point out that we have always considered the basic salaries of expatriate officers to be inflated. (15)

Sarma pointed out that the Unification scheme recommended the creation of more responsible posts and new posts¹⁶ for the locally recruited, viz.,

1. Supervisors: Primary Schools or Elementary Schools
Time scale: \$650 x 25 - 750 p.m.
2. Vice-Principals or Senior Assistants (Secondary Schools)
\$650 x 25 ... 800 p.m.
3. Specialist Teachers: heads of Department for each of the following subjects in secondary schools: English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Science, Languages.
\$650 x 25 ... 800 p.m.
4. Organisers: the then existing posts of Master of Music, Superintendent of Physical Education, Art Superintendent and other Organisers (like, for example, Dramatics) as may be necessary.

\$750 x 25 ... 900 p.m.

5. Group Supervisors: the then existing posts of Inspectors of Schools and Group Supervisors.

\$750 x 25 ... 900 p.m.

6. Deputy Director of Education. \$1,100 p.m.
7. Director of Education. \$1,200 p.m.

The S.T.U. believed that any assistant teacher in government or aided schools should be eligible for promotion to posts of Principals and any of the posts mentioned above, whenever vacancies arose; all such vacancies should be advertised and all promotions should be made through the Public Services Commission. Sarma admitted that the Honours graduates might have an advantage over the Pass degree graduates or the Normal trained teachers and said:

Honours graduates should be content to stand on this leg and should not ask for unfair differentiations.

The graduate teachers, particularly those who hold the Honours degrees, were not convinced by the reasons given by Sarma. Writing in the Grad, the magazine of the Stamford Club, Kwan Sai Kheong, the pro tem secretary of the Graduate Teachers' Association, gave 4 reasons¹⁷ why the Association came into existence on 7th September, 1951, thus:

1. S.T.U. was too large an organisation to cater for the needs of so small a minority as the graduate teachers.
2. Graduate teachers' interests were 'time and again' sacrificed. S.T.U. recommended to government that Honours graduates in the education service be placed on a salary scale much inferior to the scale which government had offered to Honours graduates in all other branches of the public service.

"It cannot be disputed that such a course of action is contrary to one of the aims of any trade union, which is to obtain for all its members just and reasonable rates of salary and conditions of service. It also betrays the principle laid down by the Benham Committee that the best graduates be attracted to the teaching service".

3. On many occasions before 1951, it fell to the lot of the Stamford Club to act as spokesman of the graduate teachers.

"While the Stamford Club had always been a willing and able champion of their cause, it must be remembered that its voice, however nobly raised in righteous indignation, may sound less forceful in the official ear, particularly when it was drowned by the clamours of S.T.U. which possessed teacher union rights".

4. The imminent establishment of the Whitley Council in Singapore. Representations from organisations registered as trade unions could be more forceful at the Whitley Council.

Post-Normal

The unified scale meant one scale stretching from the original salary of the newly qualified Normal trained teacher to the highest post in the education service; teachers would normally enjoy sections of the unified salary scale according to the standard of their training but the higher sections of this scale would be open to Normal trained teachers who had proved themselves to be worthy of more responsible positions. A.W. Frisby, Director of Education, pointed out to the S.T.U. that such a unified scale for all qualified teachers was possible in the United Kingdom because the initial professional qualification was recognised as the basic qualification for the whole of the service; it was Frisby's view that this was not possible in Singapore as the Normal Training Certificate was not of a standard which would be recognised in the United Kingdom. And if there were to be different sections of the unified scale as proposed by the S.T.U., Frisby said that there would then be virtually no difference between the Education Scheme in the Colony Schemes of Service, Higher Services and the S.T.U.'s unified scale except that the S.T.U.'s scale would have a "possible" ladder. The scale as suggested by the S.T.U. would require "special regulations" for the guidance of the P.S.C.¹⁸

In October, 1950, there were at least 800 students undergoing the Normal training course and by March 1951, there would be something like 1,200 students undergoing the same training.¹⁹ To the S.T.U., this was a fact that could not be reconciled by Frisby's objection to recognising the Normal Training Certificate when so many teachers were given the only basic training that was available for teachers in the country. The Education Department could upgrade the course which was after all conducted by the "so-called experts and specialists recruited for the purpose". It was unrealistic and unreasonable not to recognise the Normal Training Certificate in the circumstances.

In reply to Frisby on the principle of separate categories, which the Director of Education said was the 'same' as that of the existing Education scheme, the S.T.U. said that it debarred any teacher without a degree from being promoted to posts in Division I. It also stated that there was too wide a disparity between the salary schemes for the Honours Degree Officer and the Pass Degree Officer. The official reason given was that the principle behind the Higher Services Schemes apart from that of throwing them open to all who were capable of entering them, was to preserve a high professional standard by insisting on qualifications and keeping the fully qualified staff as a recognised professional service. Any dilution of the recognised profession service by admitting teachers of lower qualifications would weaken the whole service. It was to be an elite group, open only to Honours degree holders. The S.T.U. maintained that to "unify" the education service was to strengthen it.

At the meetings with the S.T.U., the Director of Education showed that his thinking did not deviate at all from that in White Paper No. 69,

which was later to crystallise as the Report No. 103 of 1950; the Report formed the basis of the 1953 Singapore Education Service Scheme. Frisby²⁰ saw a possible way out of the present difficulty with regard to the introduction of the unified scale was to make 2 parallel services, one as outlined in the "Colony of Singapore Schemes of Service 1950 Higher Services" and to have a parallel scheme which would be an interim measure accommodating teachers with a lower initial qualification than a Pass Degree by allocating to this service certain senior posts which they could enjoy as a result of experience and ability. After that, it might be possible to consider the unification of the service on the basic qualification of Certificated teacher, who would emerge in 1952.

The absence of a higher professional qualification of the Normal trained teachers was the factor in the way of granting unification as suggested by the S.T.U. Although the S.T.U. did not subscribe to this view, it expressed its determination to offer solutions and Sarma made a tentative suggestion that unification be granted and "a Post Normal course of say one year be instituted for all Normal trained teachers".²¹ He further made it clear that the suggestion did not have the sanction of the general body of the Union but he had no doubt that such a proposal would meet with favour on condition that a unified scheme as put forward by the Union was accepted by Government. The Chairman (Director of Education) said that such a Post Normal course might be possible although number presented some difficulty. The S.T.U. then made a formal proposal in the following terms:-

We are providing for a Post Normal course, a condition of service we recommend if the principle of a Unified Service and all that it implies is accepted. This recommendation of a Post Normal course is made because the Director of Education, Singapore was of the view that the only factor in the way of granting the teachers a unified service was the inadequacy of

the Normal Training Certificate as a basic qualification. We do not however agree that Normal training is an inadequate qualification in view of the noteworthy records of service of Normal Training teachers. To achieve the aspirations of teachers and to meet the objection raised by the Director of Education we offer the following solution.

A Post Normal course with Examinations at the end of the Course. This course should be completed within two years for all newly qualified Normal trained teachers and facilities to undergo this course within the specified period should be given to all teachers. We however emphasise that the Normal training and the Teachers Training College course can be so designed in years to come that the Post Normal course may be abolished.

We suggest that teachers who have completed 12 years of service on the first day of the month when this scheme comes into force should be exempted from attendance at such Post Normal courses. We recommend this modification in the case of teachers who have had 12 years service since this is the period normally taken by any teacher to cross the first bar (for Normal trained teachers) in the old scheme and it is stipulated by the Government that a teacher may cross this bar only if he has attended certain courses provided by the Department. Moreover there is an overriding factor, viz., we are strongly of the view that any teacher who has successfully completed 12 years service would have, through his experience, made good any of the deficiencies that may have existed in the Normal Training course. (22)

On the 10th July, 1950, the Colonial Secretary invited the S.T.U. to submit detailed proposals for a salary scale for the simple basic salary structure which the S.T.U. suggested for the Education Service. It submitted its memorandum, Unification of the Education Service Part II on 1st August, 1950. The time factor and the delay of the Benham Committee in releasing their report (in September, 1950) for the Federation of Malaya prevented the teachers' unions of Singapore and the Federation of Malaya from taking joint action and presenting a common memorandum simultaneously to both governments. The S.T.U. memorandum was to be amended in the light of existing conditions in the Federation of Malaya.

To the teachers' unions in the Federation of Malaya, a controversial recommendation by the S.T.U. concerned the introduction of the Post Normal course. As one teacher from Pahang put it,

to ask the Government to run a Post Normal Course is contrary to what we have hitherto been fighting for - recognition of the Normal Certificate. To go begging with an inferiority complex is to ask for contempt and ridicule. (23)

The U.S.T.²⁴ contended that the view of the Education Department that Normal training was inadequate could not be upheld because the Normal training course had been devised by the Department and hence it was ironical that the Department which was solely responsible for the standard of the Normal training course should accuse itself of inefficiency. The U.S.T. also cited the case of teachers in the United Kingdom during the immediate post-war period; they were trained under the Emergency Training Scheme and had been recognised as fully qualified teachers and the post-war Normal trained teachers, even if regarded as Normal trained teachers under an Emergency Scheme, should be given the recognition as that given to their counterparts in the United Kingdom.

Select Committee Report No. 103 of 1950

This meeting resolves that any scheme for a Unified Education Service which excludes the majority of teachers in the profession, namely, the Normal trained teachers, cannot be accepted as a truly Unified Service and insists that the Normal Training Certificate should be accepted as the basic qualification for direct entry into the Unified Education Service. (25)

The Normal Training Issue, which the S.T.U. leaders became preoccupied for the next 12 years, had its genesis in the White Paper No. 69 of 1949 and the Report No. 103 of 1950. Although the section on the Education Service (Chapter 7) in the White Paper No. 69 was withdrawn in May 1950 through the request made by the S.T.U., official thinking remained unchanged about the inadequacy of the Normal Training Certificate as the minimum basic professional qualification for a teacher. This policy more than anything else hampered the growth of professional influence and status of teachers in the English schools.

The recommendations of the Select Committee on Schemes of Service (Higher Services) for a unified education service were not a cause for jubilation. They were purported to form an attempt at implementing the principles of recruitment in Colonial White Paper No. 197. The Select Committee accepted the S.T.U. proposals of parity for men and women²⁶ and that there should be no bars in the time scale for teachers. Added salaries or allowances would be given for posts with added responsibilities. The stand of the S.T.U. was that promotion to a post should entitle the holder to be paid the appropriate scale for the post - not a system of allowances for the prize appointments where the basic salary of the time scale, determined by the initial qualifications, should remain unaltered on promotion. The system of allowances was later one of the main causes of discontent among teachers.

There were other objections.²⁷

Normal trained teachers who were not qualified for appointment under Section 4 of the General Provisions²⁸ would be allowed to sit for a competitive examination to test their basic knowledge and their teaching ability. Successful teachers would be selected for further training at university level. Teachers who failed at the 1st attempt would be given one more chance 2 years after the 1st attempt. A selected few would be assisted by Government to obtain the necessary higher qualifications to enable them to gain entry to the higher posts in the education service. This meant that not all Normal trained teachers would be allowed to rise to any of the responsible posts in the education service except those who were selected to join the university. It was because of the objection of the Director of Education that the Normal Training Certificate was inadequate as a basic qualification - the S.T.U. did not think so - that the S.T.U. in order

to achieve the aspirations of the Normal trained teachers recommended a Post Normal course as a condition of service, provided that the principles of a unified education service and all that it implied were accepted.

Another recommendation of the Report was that Normal trained teachers over the age of 35 on the 1st January, 1950 would be eligible for appointment to the unified education service notwithstanding the provisions of Section 4 of the General Provisions if they were considered to be of exceptional teaching ability by the P.S.C. Such appointments would be limited to a maximum number of 10% of the number of such teachers as on the 1st January, 1950. The S.T.U. saw this question linked to its recommendation of the Post Normal course. It was its contention that Normal trained teachers should be exempted from the Post Normal course if they had completed 12 years of service, normally the period taken by them to cross the 1st bar in the old scheme of service.

With regard to the principle of marginal differences for additional qualifications, the S.T.U. noted that the Select Committee had not adhered to it. With each year there were widening differences between the salaries recommended for the different grades of teachers. As advocated by the S.T.U., uniform rates of increments throughout the basic time scale on the principle that increments were given for work done would bring about the "marginal differences" for additional qualifications.

The Select Committee did not make any specific recommendations about including aided school teachers in the education service. In its view, any expansion of the service to include the aided school teachers was a matter for negotiation between Government and the aided

school authorities. The S.T.U. would like the aided school teachers to enjoy similar conditions of service because "the proposals for a Unified Service cannot become complete unless there are equal opportunities of advancement for aided school teachers and government school teachers since they serve the same scholastic system".

The Select Committee did not include Trade School Instructors in the unified education service. The reasons given by the S.T.U. for their inclusion in the unified education service were that technical education must be given impetus for development and that it should be given its proper recognition in the scholastic system. The Instructors prepared pupils who passed Standard V for the external examinations of the City and Guild Institution of London. And there were also no recommendations made regarding the position of the Indian graduate teachers in the education service. The S.T.U. held the view that all the Indian graduates should be placed on the graduate scale of salaries. There was no fixed policy on the question of paying the Indian graduates; some were paid the graduate scale and some were not.

The Select Committee recommended the retention of the Colonial Education Service (C.E.S.). From the point of view of the S.T.U., the principle of C.E.S. was prejudicial to the interests of the locally recruited teachers. The S.T.U. called for an end of direct recruitment from the United Kingdom to the C.E.S. as it overlooked the large number of locally recruited teachers who were capable of occupying all the responsible positions in the education service. Since the Education Service Part II included within its ranks locally recruited teachers with the highest qualifications, the S.T.U. did not see the reason or necessity for perpetuating a separate service, viz., the C.E.S. In its memorandum, the S.T.U. stated:

We lay the greatest emphasis on the fact that foreign recruits, no matter what their paper qualifications, cannot acquire a knowledge of local conditions which is superior to the knowledge of qualified locally recruited teachers.

Secondly, promotions to the highest posts should be mainly on proved merit shown in the field of education and should not be granted solely on paper qualifications obtained prior to joining the teaching profession.

We declare that in pressing for the abolition of the Colonial Education Service, we are not pressing for something new and revolutionary. We base our stand on the principles enunciated in Organisation of the Colonial Service, Colonial No. 197. These principles have been repeatedly flouted by the Trusted (1947), Cowgill (1949) and Benham (1950) Committees and we are disappointed to note that the Select Committee has also ignored the existence of those principles in recognising a watertight Colonial Education Service, separate from the Unified Education Service it has recommended.

The perpetuation of the Colonial Education Service will neutralise the principles of a Unified Education Service as it will create a parallel service in the Education Department and will provide ample opportunities for the continuance of racial discrimination. In the Unified Education Service, therefore, there should be a discontinuance of the present practice of allowing overseas recruited teachers to enter the service at a point higher in status than local teachers who have many years of experience to their credit. (29)

Their Normal Training Certificate alone was insufficient for entry to the education service proper according to Report No. 103 of Select Committee, 1950. C.C. Tan was among the Legislative Council members whom the S.T.U. Management Committee members met and he was prepared to support Normal Trained teachers in the 'unified' education service if they

... hold a local Normal Certificate and after the selection by the Public Services Commission have also successfully completed a post-Normal course of training at University or Teachers' Training College level acceptable to the Public Services Commission. Provided that the Public Services Commission may hold competitive examinations for the purpose of such candidates. (30)

His aim was to restrict the number of Normal trained teachers through competitive examinations, a view that did not diverge from that

in the White Paper No. 69 of 1949 or the Report No. 103 of 1950. It was Sarma's contention that facilities to undergo and successfully complete the Post Normal course should be given to all Normal trained teachers within the first 2 years after they obtained their Normal Training Certificate and to all Normal trained teachers employed in the service when the Scheme came into effect. There was no compromise on this issue. And both Sarma and Devan Nair contended that the younger Normal trained teachers should enter the service first and then take the Post-normal course.

Details had yet to be worked out on the suggestion of the Post Normal course. Frisby had given the impression that a Post Normal course for the Normal trained teachers would be acceptable for admission of these teachers to a unified salary scale. But the fact that a great number of such teachers was involved in addition to the urgent necessity of training more teachers, though the Emergency Training Schemes,³¹ made the Department shrink from welcoming the Post Normal course as a condition for admission to the unified education service. It was an administrative impossibility. But the persistent agitation by the S.T.U. made it almost impossible for the Department to ignore it. Following the Report of the Select Committee and the representations of the S.T.U., arrangements for the Post Normal courses were being discussed with the Director of Education, the Chairman of the P.S.C. as well as the Legislative Councillors, notably Thio Chan Bee.

At its Emergency General Meeting on the 28th July, 1951, the S.T.U. strongly protested against the "unwarranted delay by the Government of Singapore in the acceptance of the Select Committee's Report on a unified education service".³² It regretted making the

protest but felt that the Government had failed to realise the urgency of this question which had been a subject of negotiation for "more than 3 years".³³

The following written questions and answers³⁴ on the implementation of the Unified Education Scheme were tabled at the Legislative Council Meeting on the 18th August, 1952:

The Honourable Mr. Thio Chan Bee (Member for Balestier):-
To ask the Honourable the Colonial Secretary -

1. if he will kindly report what progress has been made in regard to the Unified Education Service Scheme which has now been under consideration by the Government for over one and a half years; and
2. whether he is in a position to announce the approximate date when the Scheme will be introduced; and if he is unable to do so, if he will state the reasons for the continued delay and what he proposes to do with the Scheme.

Written Answers:-

1. Consultations have been taking place with the Public Services Commission on a Scheme for a Singapore Education Service and the latest proposals recently received from the Public Services Commission have been considered and accepted in principle. These proposals differ from the normal pattern of the other Higher Schemes of Service and have been drawn up to fulfil the special needs of the teaching profession and the education system of Singapore.
2. A number of technical matters remain to be settled before the proposals are in a form ready for implementation and arrangements are in hand for these to be dealt with as speedily as possible.

In order to press on the "struggle" for a single basic scale for all qualified teachers, the S.T.U. had to accommodate the conflicting interests of the Honours degree holders in the education service. The S.T.U. Management Committee had already come to agree that the marginal difference between the salaries of an Honours graduate and of a Pass degree graduate should be 2 increments. Its conception of marginal difference in the unified education service had, in this instance, to

be stretched to its maximum to include this difference of 2 yearly increments between these 2 categories of teachers whose lengths of training periods differed by one year, according to the local system. This principle should be maintained throughout the service, at the initials, at the maxima and throughout the scales of all categories of teachers in the scheme. It implied that if the salary of the Honours graduate was raised, those at the other categories in the scheme should also go up. All teachers in the scheme should, in theory, at least have the same opportunities for promotion to the higher appointments.

This policy was not one to win adherents to its cause where Honours graduate teachers were concerned. They were the elite of the teaching profession and should inherit the mantle of the members of the C.E.S. This attitude characterised the first teachers of the G.T.A. and they saw their role as that of securing for local graduates the 'plums' of the education service.

There was nothing like an unduly protracted negotiation on salaries and working conditions to bring out in a repetitive and persistent manner all the multifarious grievances and demands of teachers. The situation for the S.T.U. demanded the highest standards of integrity and honesty from its leaders. Its 2 most effective and respected leaders were languishing in the colonial gaol. Those who succeeded them had to guard against the charge of having secret deals and "collusion" with the colonial establishment and had to represent all the broad categories of teachers. For the S.T.U. to be representative of all the grades of teachers, it had to appear that it was not just interested in the Normal trained teachers to the

exclusion of the others. But the graduate teachers on the whole had their own Association and had expressed their dissatisfaction with the points of entry to the unified scheme as proposed by the S.T.U. This was a period of stress. There were frequent changes in the main office-holders of the S.T.U., indicating instability and lack of continued leadership and also the fulfilled or frustrated ambitions of these elected officials in terms of promotion in the education service. But what was gratifying to the S.T.U. was the small group of Raffles College graduates who, "actuated by a sense of the importance of unity in the profession, have remained loyal to the union".³⁵

The Colonial Secretary, W.L. Blythe, was forced³⁶ to give the reasons for the delay in forming the unified education service. He had told a member in the Legislative Council that a small working party of representatives of the Government of Singapore and the Federation of Malaya was set up to reach an agreed solution. Earlier during adjournment, Thio Chan Bee had pointed out that when the question of unified education service was raised in the Federal Legislative Council, the Government of the Federation of Malaya had replied that the unified education service was purely a Singapore affair. C.C. Tan then said:

There never was any reason for asking the Federation Government to come into the matter. And from my own experience, the best method of killing any scheme for local men is to bring the Federation into it.

In reply, the Colonial Secretary said that it would be dangerous to have 2 different salary scales and schemes for teachers in the 2 territories, particularly when both had to possess the same qualifications and pass the same examinations. While it was true that teachers in government service were not transferred from one territory to the other, such transfers did take place in the case of mission schools. Any

scheme for Government school teachers, he said, would inevitably be applied to aided school teachers and it would be embarrassing to have basically different schemes throughout the 2 territories.

The S.T.U. in its press statement expressed grave doubts as to the sincerity of Singapore Government's "anxiety for parity of treatment" between teachers of Singapore and those of the Federation of Malaya.

In trying to prove the necessity for uniformity of teachers' schemes for the Federation and Singapore, Mr. Blythe mentioned the possibility of difficulty for Missions which transferred their teachers from one territory to the other. Mr. Blythe seems to be unaware of the fact that there already exists a big disparity in the treatment of aided school teachers in the Federation and in Singapore: the aided school teachers in the Federation are not being paid Housing Allowance which is being paid to their counterparts in the Colony. When this disparity amounting from \$40/- to \$80/- is even now making such transfers "extremely embarrassing", Mr. Blythe's concern about the Missions in this matter is of no avail, and cannot be an excuse for delaying the implementation of the proposed Unified scheme.

If the Singapore Government felt that they could not have a scheme without the Federation accepting it they should not have appointed a Select Committee to frame a scheme for Singapore only: instead they should have appointed at the very outset a Combined Committee for the two territories. They cannot plead that they were so thoughtless as not to have seen this necessity for consultation with the Federation Government from the beginning: we believe that this afterthought is a purposeful one to delay the implementation of the scheme. (37)

The S.T.U. wrote to the Colonial Secretary on the 10th September, 1952 requesting consultation with him on the details of implementation and reminders were sent in on 3rd October and 13th November, 1952 without any positive reply. There were fears that some of the discredited Union leaders had entered into secret negotiations and struck bargains for their own benefit.

The Singapore Government had "kept in touch with members of the Singapore Teachers' Union on the Unified Education Service and knows their views and opinions on the scheme,"³⁸ H.W. Nightingale,

Establishment Officer said on the 9th December, 1952, in reply to the S.T.U. which had warned Government that it would have to accept the responsibility for any attempt "to foist upon teachers" a scheme that differed from the one to which the Union had agreed. Who were the members who were consulted? The S.T.U. Management Committee saw no justification in the Government's statement that Government had kept in touch with "members" of the S.T.U. on the vital question of the unified education service. Was it a return to the days of the teachers' associations? The S.T.U. was not officially consulted:

Such action on the part of Government is unconstitutional and harmful to trade unionism. (39)

However by the end of January, 1953, the Singapore Education Service Scheme (English Schools) was published. The Certificated teacher was put on the initial of the basic scale⁴⁰ for all qualified teachers. The Normal trained teacher who had not passed the age of 35 on the 1st January, 1950 or crossed the 1st bar in the Benham or Cowgill scale was not considered a "qualified" teacher and was accordingly placed on an inferior scale outside the Scheme proper and would not therefore be eligible for appointment for the allowance posts under Schedule A.⁴¹ On the 21st February, 1953, the Extraordinary General Meeting of the S.T.U. resolved to accept in principle the Government's proposal for a Singapore Education Service but reserved its right to negotiate on several matters. The most important question was the recognition of the Normal Training Certificate and it was connected with the Post Normal course. The claims of the aided school teachers to be treated as government employees were not considered. Another problem concerned the parity of men and women with regard to salaries and status; the Select Committee Report No. 103 of 1950 accepted the proposal of the S.T.U. that

there should be parity for men and women teachers but the 1953 S.E.S.
Scheme rejected it.

Part II, 1955 to 1959.

THE NORMAL TRAINED TEACHERS

The Normal trained teachers who had spearheaded the fight for a unified teaching service found themselves 'outside' the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. They felt like pariahs in the service; their Normal Training Certificate was not considered the basic minimum for direct entry to the education service and they suffered a disability under Section 7(iv)¹ of the Scheme which debarred them from rising to the posts under Schedule A. There was resentment among the Normal trained teachers who felt that paper qualifications were not necessarily more valuable than experience and merit. The brunt of the work in the primary and secondary schools fell squarely on their shoulders, what with the tremendous expansion in enrolment. The great majority of teachers was made up of Normal trained teachers. Coupled with this was the fact that the practical needs of the Ten-Year and the Five-Year Supplementary Plans called for the unabated recruitment of Normal trained teachers. As pointed out in the S.T.U. Petition, this "will inevitably lead to exacerbating a situation where the vast majority of teachers who, while providing the basic support of the service, find themselves increasingly alienated from that service".² The growing number of dissatisfied teachers would steadily increase to the detriment of the education system.

This situation had been brought about by the Ministry's failure to provide for one single course of training for all intending teachers. The existence of two separate training courses, one for Normal trained teachers and the other for Certificated teachers, was a cause of much of the resentment and frustration among the majority of teachers in the English schools. It had led to a cleavage between the two non-graduate groups of teachers and weakened the S.T.U. As early as 1950, the Select Committee of the Singapore Advisory Council recommended the abolition of Normal training 'as soon as possible'.³ The two year full-time Certificate course was turning out a pathetically small number of teachers.⁴ No plans were however made to arrange for the abolition of Normal training.

The rapid pace of political events from 1954 when the student unrest in Chinese Middle schools started was a far cry from the "peaceful" days before the war. Of crucial importance to emerge during this period of turmoil was the All-Party Report on Chinese Education. It called for, among other things, an integration of the two main streams of education, the English and Chinese, into one educational system as it felt the "division into English education and vernacular education (largely Chinese) is unhealthy for the future of the Colony of Singapore".⁵ With self-government in 1955, the Ministry of Education replaced the Education Department and its main preoccupation with the explosive situation arising from the problems of resolving the place of the Chinese language and education was such as to exclude all other educational issues. It was under such circumstances that the then Director of Education, R.M. Young was asked about the policy concerning teacher-training and specifically when the Ministry would arrange for the abolition of Normal Teacher training. Bristling with impatience,

he said:

I am not a prophet and I cannot possibly give a date on when recruitment to Normal Training will cease. (6)

There has always been a shortage of qualified teachers in the schools and in 1955 there was no question at all of abandoning Normal training which allowed the trainee teachers to teach while they were undergoing training. It would have been a more realistic policy if the two courses had been merged right from the start and part-time teaching, as obtained in Normal training, could be retained in order to alleviate the shortage of teaching staff. Full-time teacher-training, as obtained in the Certificate course, was too much of a luxury then for the Colony and while it existed, it could not adequately supply the great number of teachers required and instead it made for a rigid division, resulting in the Normal trained teachers feeling inferior and being regarded as the outcasts of the education service. Normal training was instituted to meet the specific educational requirements of the Malay Peninsula and Singapore and not of the United Kingdom. The recognition or non-recognition of the Normal Training Certificate by the Board of Education in the United Kingdom was not a relevant consideration. The point, stressed by the S.T.U., was that due status and dignity of the Normal trained teachers should be accorded in terms of the actual position which they occupied in the education service and their "undeniably considerable contribution to it".

The institution of the one-year part-time Post Normal course in early 1954 was a controversial issue. The 1953 S.E.S. Scheme (English Schools) enabled Normal trained teachers with the Post Normal Certificate entry to the Scheme without the disability under Section 7(iv); technically the teachers in question were allowed to apply for standard

promotions to the higher posts in the service and the allowances that the posts carried. However there were inadequate facilities for all the Normal trained teachers to embark on a worthwhile up-grading course. The S.T.U. agreed with great reluctance to the institution of the Post Normal course but the Management Committee of the S.T.U. in September, 1954⁷ reversed the Union's position. This Committee looked upon the Post Normal course as a capitulation to the official logic. In the Petition, the S.T.U. spelt out its new policy thus:

The Post Normal course would necessarily be obviated by the due recognition of the Normal Certificate. Our request for the abolition of the Post-Normal course does not mean, however, that we are averse to purely post-professional courses as such. We believe that Post-Professional courses in such subjects as Art and Handwork, Physical Training, Music, Dramatics, Speech Training, Biology, etc., should be instituted for all categories of teachers, on a far wider scale than at present, provided of course that such Post-Professional courses are not made basic conditions for entry into the Singapore Education Service. Such courses should be purely Post-Professional in nature and intended to promote the professional standards of all categories of teachers.

The Teachers' Unions in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore have all along been interested in the promotion of professional standards among their members as may be witnessed by the vacation courses organised by them at regular intervals with the co-operation of the Department of Education and the University of Malaya and which included such subjects as "Developments in Educational Practice", "Visual Approach in Education", "Music in School", "Social Medicine", "Production of Plays" and "Political Institutions of Today". We have no doubt that the Teachers' Unions will carry on their good work in this respect. (8)

The G.T.A. expressed concern that the largest group of teachers in the English schools, the Normal trained teachers, were excluded from the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. Their discontent was an unhealthy development. The G.T.A. suggested that the Normal trained teachers could be considered as belonging to the Scheme "but starting on the same initial as they have now and having until they reach the initial salary of the

Certificated teachers the same salary as they have in the present Scheme". And once they reached the initial salary of the Certificated teachers, they would be on the scale of the Certificated teachers until they reached the maximum of the scale for the Normal trained teachers. In order to enjoy the higher maximum on the scale of the Certificated teachers, the Normal trained teachers were expected "to pass the Post Normal course or the Higher School Certificate Examination or the Intermediate Examination of any university".⁹ The G.T.A. believed that this suggestion, apart from giving satisfaction to the Normal trained teachers, would induce a large majority of them to seek academic improvement in a practical manner and become "more efficient teachers". It was just as well that this suggestion was made to the Minister of Education without consulting the S.T.U. The S.T.U. was, at this stage, in no mood to entertain such a proposal.

The Director of Education was not impressed by the suggestion of the G.T.A. For him any change of the status of the Normal trained teachers would mean "violating some of the main accepted principles of the Report No. 103 of 1950" on which the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme was based and implemented with the minimum of alteration. According to him the Post Normal course was successful. Continuing, the Director of Education said:

Your suggestion that higher academic qualifications should be accepted as alternatives ignores the fact that the objection to the Normal Training course is its incompleteness as a course of professional training; higher academic qualifications would not ordinarily remedy that defect. Experience can do a good deal towards filling the gap, and the present accepted system of Normal Training plus experience plus post normal training is thought to be more likely to increase their efficiency as teachers. (10)

And in the meantime Normal training would have to go on, 'incomplete' though it was as a form of professional training and no

attempt would be made to improve the course or introduce a single system of part-time teacher training to replace the two types of teacher training courses. There seemed no adequate policy forthcoming from the Ministry for dealing with such problems of teacher-training.

The anxiety felt by the Normal trained teachers over their status vis-a-vis the Certificated teachers was an important factor to consider when studying the development of the S.T.U. The Normal trained teachers who formed the majority of members in the S.T.U. were mainly concerned with their own problems and what was known as the Normal Training Issue eclipsed all other issues. In their struggle for a unified education service since 1947, they had encountered the growth of an informal pressure group made up of graduate teachers, who felt that their interests were being sacrificed in the name of unification; this pressure group crystallised into the Graduate Teachers' Association in September, 1951. The cleavage between the Normal trained teachers and the Certificated teachers took place in 1953. The women Normal trained teachers seemed to accept without much complaint the lower scale compared to their male counterparts. At this stage, the S.T.U. existed only as a pressure group for furthering the interests of the Normal trained teachers although it did often arrogate to itself the status of a responsible body to be recognised for expressing the points of views of all teachers in English schools. The S.T.U. professed that it would like to see a homogeneous group of teachers, men and women, disciplined by a single type of teacher training and eligible for promotions, based on merit and experience, to the highest posts in the education service.

Its leaders saw the acceptance of their Normal Training Certificate by the Ministry as a means of being placed on the 1953

S.E.S. Scheme proper and as an opportunity for them to rectify the 'anomalies' of their salary scale vis-a-vis the salary scale of the Certificated teachers. They were not demanding that Normal training should be considered on par with the Certificate course which was then accepted as the basic qualification for entry to the Singapore Education Service Scheme. But they felt that the sooner the integration of the Normal trained teachers' salary scale was made with the salary scale of the Certificated teachers the sooner would the frustration and the deep sense of injustice be removed. They also felt their promotion prospects were affected as seniority in service was normally correlated to the salaries drawn.

The Ministry's reply to the S.T.U. Petition sent on the 19th February, 1955 was unfavourable. Another avenue through which the S.T.U. could air their grievances was presented when Sir Robert Black, the Governor of Singapore appointed a Malayanisation Commission on the 4th August, 1955. It was then the decision of the Government to Malayanise the education service in 4 years.

The S.T.U. was in no mood to lend its support to the G.T.A. memorandum on Malayanisation of the Education Service. At its Emergency Committee meeting,¹¹ it did not approve the joint memorandum of the S.T.U. and the G.T.A. although its own President¹² was on the committee drafting the memorandum. To the S.T.U., the first essential preliminary point was that

... the scheme of service of the S.E.S. be clearly examined with a view to removing barriers and anomalies in order that non-graduate officers who have proved their worth and ability may not be obstructed from going up the highest posts.(13)

This point which the S.T.U. wanted to include in the joint memorandum was not acceptable to the G.T.A. According to Ambiavagar, the G.T.A.

President,

... the plan for sending a joint memorandum was wrecked when they (S.T.U.) insisted on slipping in a section asking Government to revise the Education scheme to provide all Normal Trained with full and free opportunity for promotion in the service to all posts. We cannot agree to give such a blank check but are prepared to discuss reasonable, specific proposals and go a long way to be generous to the S.T.U. (14)

The meeting between the S.T.U. delegates and the Minister of Education on 14th September, 1955 did not produce any result. What gave a boost to the morale of the S.T.U. members was the publication of the Interim Report of the Malayanisation Commission in February 1956. In no uncertain terms, it stated

that Normal Trained teachers were in the great majority and it was agreed that they had rendered a great and noble service to the cause of education in the country and that it was unrealistic to leave them outside the S.E.S. (1953). (15)

It further stated that the prevailing scheme for the education service was highly complicated and cumbersome and at the same time, it was ineffective as a service because it left out the largest group, the Normal trained teachers, and recommended that a unified service scheme, including the Normal trained teachers, should be set up as soon as practicable. (16)

(The Minority report of the Commission upheld the views of the Ministry officials, i.e. the minimum qualifications for teachers should be the Certificate Course as the standards of Normal trained teachers were inadequate for modern needs).¹⁷

The Ministry's official position changed after the publication of the Interim Report. According to a letter by R.E. Ince (for Deputy Secretary 'A'), the Director of Personnel now saw "no essential objection" to the recognition of the Normal Training Certificate as the basic minimum qualification for entry to the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme

(English schools)".¹⁸

On the 10th February, 1956, Kam Siew Yee, the general secretary of the S.T.U., proposed the following integration of the Normal trained and the Certificated teachers thus:

1. As trainees, both should continue to receive the prevailing remuneration, i.e. in the case of the Normal trainee \$175/- per month basic and the Certificate trainee \$100/- allowance per month.
2. Upon qualifying, both should be offered the basic salary of the S.E.S. Scheme - the Normal trainee taking 3 years part-time and the Certificate trainee 2 years full-time. (19)

On this basis, the Certificated teachers in the 3rd year of their career should gain an extra \$480/- when compared with that of the Normal trained teachers. With regard to the Normal trained teachers, who had already passed the Post Normal course, the S.T.U. proposed that negotiation was necessary to determine their proper emplacement in the Scheme.

In the meantime we wish to state that upon the integration of the two scales our Union insists that in all other respects, e.g. advancement and promotion to administrative posts in the Ministry of Education, the two certificates should enjoy equal consideration.

The S.T.U. then asked for direct negotiations with the Ministry. Its delegation "will go to you with full powers to negotiate and we hope that you will have similar powers to accept or reject on behalf of the Government so that this matter can be settled expeditiously".

In reply to the S.T.U.'s proposals for the integration of the Normal trained teachers' scale with the basic for the S.E.S., the Director of Education, D. McLellan, suggested two alternative procedures. The S.T.U. was to choose either

1. to discuss informally with Ministry officials its proposals or

2. to take the necessary steps to form a Departmental Joint Council.

(This Council would have to contain representatives of all the Unions in the Department to ensure that the views of all classes of officers should be fairly represented. Even so its decisions would be without prejudice to the over-riding authority of Government, to the responsibilities of the Staff Side to its constituent bodies and to the authority of the Singapore Civil Service Joint Council). (20)

At this stage, the S.T.U. Standing Committee on the Normal Training Issue felt that the situation necessitated the enlistment of a legal adviser. Kam then wrote to the Permanent Secretary asking for direct negotiation and informing the Ministry that the S.T.U. legal adviser, Lee Kuan Yew, would accompany the S.T.U. representatives.²¹ In the meantime, McLellan had left for Geneva and was not expected back until 20th May, 1956. According to Ince, McLellan would wish to be present personally during such negotiations that might take place as that was an important matter.²² So the meeting could not be held before McLellan returned. Kam wrote again after McLellan returned and Ince replied that it would be better to start the matter off by holding informal discussions and he said that the legal adviser should not be present at such discussions.²³ The S.T.U. agreed to have informal talks with the Permanent Secretary because it felt that Normal Training was the issue and not the legal adviser. Nothing fruitful resulted from the discussions.

The first militant phase in the S.T.U. history in Singapore was caused by the reply which the S.T.U. received from the new Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education, Lee Siow Mong, in June, 1957. He maintained that the Normal trained teachers had always been in the S.E.S. since the Scheme was first introduced but he was prepared to accept "that although the Normal trained teachers are in service, they

are under a disability under Section (iv) of the Scheme which says that they will not be eligible for appointment allowances under Schedule A". And he concluded that since the Normal trained teachers were already in the Scheme, "the question of a point of entry into the scheme does not arise". To free the Normal trained teachers from the disability under section 7 (iv), he informed the Union "that steps are in hand to amend the S.E.S. Scheme by Gazette Notification to allow Normal trained teachers to qualify for appointment allowances under the Scheme".²⁴

The S.T.U. leaders reacted to this by giving notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting of its members to be held at the Badminton Hall on 13th June, 1957. The items on the agenda²⁵ were:

1. To discuss the latest development in the Normal Training Issue.
2. To take a strike ballot.

In the circulars to S.T.U. members, K.S. Williams (General Secretary) and S.R. Ross (Assistant Secretary) tried to allay the fear among teachers, especially those in training, as to what would happen to them in the event of a strike.

We can assure you that we have the word of the Principal, Teachers' Training College that there will be no victimisation of any nature as long as you are a member of the S.T.U. Neither will there be any victimisation from the Ministry of Education or from any quarter. (26)

The Government in a press statement on 11th June 1957 reiterated the points made by Lee Siow Mong and stressed that there was absolutely 'no justification for any action to precipitate a strike'.²⁷ The Education bill for 1957, it said, was nearly \$58½ m. as against a total revenue of nearly \$236 m. and this bill would continue to rise. The tone was one of sweet reasonableness:

The present Education Service Scheme is not as tidy as it should be and Government is doing all it can to bring about a more efficient and workable scheme as soon as possible.

It must be emphasised that teachers have a duty to the community and particularly to the children they teach. (28)

The S.T.U. members, 1,500 of them, who turned up at Badminton Hall on the 13th June 1957 were not deterred by the arguments of the Government. The leaders of the Normal trained teachers in S.T.U. rallied the teachers and seemed to be prepared for a show-down with the colonial establishment. Scrupulous attention was paid to seeing that only those who were affected voted and that all the legal requirements of the Trade Union Ordinance 1940 were adhered to as they did not want to be faulted on any technicality.

In a circular letter to those who were absent from the Extraordinary General Meeting and who were not yet members, Williams exhorted them thus:

Your dignity as a teacher will only come when the respect due to you is accorded by the government.
Away with hypocrisy, let's face facts.
You are not in the scheme of service. ...
Only bureaucratic double-talk will deny this. (29)

The S.T.U. stand, after the ballot had been taken, was explained by Williams thus:

Should the Government fail to open negotiations and meet our case, the teachers will strike. (30)

At this point, it is interesting to see how the members of the G.T.A. stood in the event of a strike envisaged by the S.T.U. Kwan Sai Kheong, President of G.T.A., pointed out at the meeting that if the S.T.U. struck and the G.T.A. maintained a neutral position, it might place G.T.A. members in an awkward position if the G.T.A. members and other graduates were to do work normally done by teachers. To him,

there were 3 alternatives, viz., not to work, to accept extra work under protest or to accept work willingly. He reminded members that they were ordinarily liable to do extra work.³¹ There was a lengthy discussion and finally a resolution, by no means unanimous, was passed thus:

In the event of a strike by members of the S.T.U., the G.T.A. will direct its members to carry out their normal duties and to refrain from doing any work which is normally done by members of the S.T.U.

The Minister of Education made a press statement on the 15th July, 1957 that Government was willing to receive representations from the S.T.U. on a proposed new revision of salaries for teachers.³² This was a new element in the dispute, thrown in by the Government, that is, the proposed new revision of salaries. According to Goh Kong Beng, the S.T.U. President, the Management Committee would withdraw the strike decision if, upon receipt from the Government of a copy of the proposed revision of salaries, it was found there was a basis for negotiations. He said:

Nobody likes a strike. Many public bodies and public spirited individuals appealed to us to avert a strike and give the Government a chance to prove its sincerity in the matter. We will meet sincerity with sincerity. (33)

The Disciplinary Provisions, Nos. 207 and 208 of the General Orders,³⁴ were cited in order to prevent government employees from going on a strike. G.O. No. 207 stated that any officer who, without leave or reasonable cause, was absent for more than 7 days, might be held to have vacated his office. G.O. No. 208 stated among other things that absence from duty for any period whether more or less than 7 days, without permission, constituted a break in service. The S.T.U. stated that the disciplinary provisions were enacted years before the trade

unionism of teachers. The President of the S.T.U. declared that no court of inquiry would uphold the government's decision to invoke the disciplinary provisions of the G.O. because "it was never the intention of the legislature behind these 2 sections to interfere with a strike on the bargaining rights of a Union". And if these disciplinary provisions were intended to take away the strike action from trade unions of government employees then "government employees' unions are just one big farce and they may as well dissolve".³⁵

The S.T.U. then decided to send deputations to acquaint opposition members in the Legislative Assembly of the facts of the Normal Training Issue so that they would raise questions. Lee Kuan Yew, member for Tanjong Pagar, made a speech on the provisions of the General Orders and Colonial Regulations and the right of the government employees to strike. The Chief Secretary, W.A.C. Goode replied on the adjournment of the Legislative Assembly meeting by deploring the continued emphasis on rights rather than duties and by explaining the special position of government employees who had "strong staff associations able to talk with authority and influence". Continuing, he said:

When a Government servant thus terminates his employment by going on strike, he not only breaks faith with his duty of service to the public who pay him and safeguard him from arbitrary treatment, but he also faces certain particular consequences that flow from his position as a public servant whose terms and conditions of service are governed by statutory rules and regulations. It is important that all Government servants should be fully aware of these consequences before they resort to strike action.

A Government servant who is absent from duty on strike breaks his service just as any other striker does. But it follows from this break in service that his pension and other service benefits will be seriously prejudiced.

Government pensions are governed by law; and the law says, quite rightly, that to count for pension, service must be continuous. Therefore a break in service caused by striking

will automatically forfeit for pension purposes all service prior to the strike.

This is a very serious consequence. It stems from the provisions of the Pensions Ordinance and from General Orders. To make sure that Government servants do not go on strike, forgetting that they stand to forfeit all their previous service, we have recently issued specific warnings to all who are reported to be considering strike action. We want to make them realise that their position is not the same as the position of employees of bus companies or rubber factories.

The member for Tanjong Pagar pointed out there was no difference between a private employee and a Government employee. There is quite a fundamental difference. For a public servant, his conditions of service are governed by the law. It is not a matter simply of direct bargaining between a number of employees and an employer.

...

The important thing is to bring home to the public servants that if they go on strike they stand to lose a great deal more than an ordinary employee.

...

When a man is a pensionable public servant then the strike should be a very last resort he takes. If he does take, he does so at his peril. (36)

Judging from the righteous indignation expressed by some of the leaders and the fierce "Emergency Releases", one might conclude that the solidarity evinced in the unanimous decision to strike made on the 13th June, 1957 would see the Normal trained teachers through to victory. This was an issue that absorbed the energy of the S.T.U. as no other issue did for the last 8 years. 1 Emergency Release said, among other things, thus:

For 8 years we argued and reasoned, trying to avoid that big step, the strike. We well know and still hold to our civic and professional responsibilities. This challenge from the Ministry however closes the door fast to further talks and discussions. We press on, therefore, with the weapon that has been thrust into our hands; that is, the strike. We are left with no other alternative.

What will happen if we do not go on strike? One of the first to be hit will be the Union. It will perish. If that happens, teachers will be at the mercy of every whim and fancy of the Ministry. There will be no safeguards, no shield to protect them from a Ministry that has achieved a notoriety for bungling and day-to-day haphazardness. Puppets and pawns would be better off.

If the Ministry chooses to throw down the gauntlet, then for the welfare of the educationalists, for education itself and in the name of the country, let us hear ourselves as men and go forward bold, united and unswerving.(37)

The Government teachers had been threatened with the G.O. and the consequences in terms of the forfeiture of their years of service and of their pensions. The Normal trained teachers who had completed the Post Normal course and the older teachers had nothing to gain from taking part in the strike. Many of the women teachers were among those who resigned from the S.T.U. No figures were compiled on the actual number of teachers who resigned from the S.T.U. at that period but the situation was not a happy one. This was the first time the teachers in Singapore had voted to go on a strike and although the reasons were there, there was in fact a deplorable lack of union consciousness. The President of the S.T.U. at that crucial point of time was a candidate of the Labour Front, the ruling party in Singapore, in a bye-election. There was then lack of confidence in the President; the leadership of the S.T.U., on the whole, did not command the respect of the teaching profession. But the most important single factor that caused the withdrawal of the strike decision, although the proposed new revision of salaries had not yet been received, was the threat of the Government to apply the G.O. on erring teachers. A sense of powerlessness pervaded but there was hope that with full self-government conditions would change for the better. The lack of full commitment of the members to the cause of teachers in general remained.

On the 3rd August, 1957, the Permanent Secretary of the Establishment Branch stated:

That Certificated and Normal Trained teachers will be on the same scale in as much as they will receive the same annual increments ...

I cannot promise that the starting point will be the same for both categories of teachers though I do not contemplate a wide difference. (38)

There was anxiety over the long delay. The Establishment Branch was supposed to give the S.T.U. some indications of the lines the new proposals should take and two weeks later, the Establishment Branch would submit actual proposals.

Fears of delay were expressed. On 14th November, 1957, Williams reported to the Emergency Committee meeting that he had had so far 3 meetings with the Permanent Secretary in connection with the New Pay Scheme. No draft proposals were forthcoming from the Ministry; negotiations could not therefore proceed. According to Williams, there was an attempt to get the S.T.U. to agree to payment of allowances to those 'officiating' in posts. The S.T.U. pressed for a 'professional' salary scale for the Normal trained teachers as it was not interested in specialist allowances as such. This question, it was feared, would sidetrack the S.T.U. from its object of securing an adequate professional salary scale for Normal trained teachers. Specialist allowances would only increase the differentials between the salaries of Normal trained teachers and those who had opportunities for promotion. And as the Union had previously protested against the manner in which these posts had been filled, the S.T.U. decided against meeting the Ministry on the question of allowances to be paid to the people concerned.

By the end of 1957, the S.T.U. had contacted the G.T.A.,

Certificated Teachers' Association, Singapore Association of Head Teachers and the Alliance of Teachers (which catered for the untrained teachers in private English schools) in order to form a committee to negotiate on behalf of all teachers in English schools. Letters were written to the Establishment Branch for the new salary proposals. It was only on the 14th March, 1958 that a meeting was called by the Official Side of the Civil Service Joint Council and the New Pay Scheme was handed to the representatives of teachers' unions.

Williams reported³⁹ on the points made by Lee Siow Mong at the meeting. He thanked teachers for the patience shown in waiting for a long period and hoped that various organisations would co-operate and work as a team; it was no use playing a game of hide-and-seek as they would be creating more problems. He said in the past year there was a lot of discontent in the public service as a result of the existence of many salary scales.

The proposed New Pay Scheme, he said, was an attempt to streamline the public service and the scales were drawn up based on certain key scales in the public service. The main principles as enunciated by Lee were that

1. no serving officer would suffer loss now or in the future;
2. strictly speaking, the value of a teacher was dependent on his economic value;
3. no allowance posts would be created as they would make the schemes immobile and work unfairly against certain categories and instead, there were to be promotion scales;
4. people with similar qualifications should roughly receive the same pay.

He concluded by saying that it was only by adhering to this type of arrangement that they could ensure that the right type of people

came to the service.

It had never been the intention of the Establishment Branch to work out a formula whereby the salary scale of the Normal trained teachers could be integrated with that of the Certificated teachers within the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. Its intention was to introduce another S.E.S. Scheme with lower pay scales for the new entrants belonging to the categories of Certificate trained, Normal trained and Graduate (Pass Degree) teachers and although it sought to eliminate the anomalies between the Certificated teachers' salary scale and Normal trained teachers' salary scale in the New Pay Scheme, it was in fact an attempt on the part of the Establishment Branch to devalue the worth of the teaching certificates. The New Pay Scheme had precious little that the S.T.U. stood for - and it was exactly what the S.T.U. had feared long before the release of the New Pay Scheme.

The Normal Training Issue was then pushed to the background. It had to contend with other issues for priority in the affairs of the S.T.U. for self-government brought with it a host of new problems. For the first time, the S.T.U. admitted defeat but that the eight-year old struggle of the Normal trained teachers was not over. Wee Chwee Hock, the General Secretary, in July, 1958, said thus:

The Minister for Education has won the battle by using his Secret Weapon - the G.O. We venture to assert however that this is likely to prove a Pyrrhic victory for the Government. Deliberately to flout the views of an organised trade union is hardly a wise move, even in the narrowest political sense. In a wider context, the effect of subjecting education to restrictive financial system, and so cutting back development and causing frustration among the majority of the teachers at a time when the need for expansion is so urgent, must inevitably prove a disastrous policy for the country as a whole, and will certainly rebound, sooner or later, on the Government itself. (40)

CHAPTER 10

TEACHERS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT

By 1955 it was clear that the political necessities of the time were leading to a "parity of esteem" of the four parallel streams of education, based on the main languages taught, and to a greater and more comprehensive control of the complex education set-up by the Ministry of Education. The whole education system was going through a period of change and continuous expansion; government Chinese bilingual schools were being set up and a departure from past policy was seen in the offer of full status to aided Chinese schools whose teachers, except for pension rights and medical benefits, were put on the same footing as their Government colleagues. There was also the related increase in the number of administrators, Inspectors and Teacher Training Officers needed in order to run the educational machinery in a smooth and efficient manner. Free primary education in any of the languages for all was the envisaged policy and this had great implications in educational planning.

Below is a table¹ showing the staff position in Government English schools in August, 1955.

	Establishment	Expatriate	Local	Vacant
Superscale	16	11	2	3
Graduate Teachers	236	60	97	79
Certificated Teachers	95	-	95	-
Normal Trained Teachers	691	-	691	-
Total	<u>1,038</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>885</u>	<u>82</u>

- Note:-
1. Under 'Graduate Teachers' were included all expatriate teachers though not all of them were graduates.
 2. All acting appointments were considered vacant.

There was a serious shortage of senior teachers to fill all the posts of responsibility in the education service. From the 1955 figures, only 87 Normal trained teachers in government English schools had more than 10 years' experience while they were already more than 102 posts of Principals of Primary Schools.² The plan was to build many more new government English primary schools each year during the next few years in the life of the ruling political party working under the Rendel Constitution.

By 1959, the number of trained and experienced teachers to fill the senior posts in the government English schools alone, as projected by the Permanent Secretary, was given as 750.³

1953 S.E.S. Scheme

The Scheme did not encourage the teachers' unions to adopt a common approach to the problems of the profession. Fierce sectional antagonisms were demonstrated when they faced the questions of promotions and Malayanisation.

Early in the implementation of the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme, the

Director of Education realised that the urgent expansion of the education service was handicapped by the disability the non-graduate teachers suffered under the Scheme; they formed the bulk of experienced teachers but they were not eligible for appointments to senior posts. The G.T.A. had interpreted para. 2(e) in Schedule A of the Scheme⁴ to mean that non-graduate teachers would be debarred from the appointments listed as Grade II and III Specialists. But the Director of Education did not hold the same interpretation of that paragraph; he claimed that he had stated on several occasions that "it was inherent in the Scheme for the S.E.S. that all posts in it were opened to all Singapore teachers once admitted to the service".

He asked whether the Graduate Teachers' Association would have any objection to the establishment of the principle that a specially deserving non-graduate teacher might be appointed to a specialist post. Mr. Ambiavagar said that the Graduate Teachers Association had never considered this but he himself would not oppose it. (5)

It was on March, 1955 that the Director of Education informed the G.T.A. that the Government had ruled that (1) non-graduate teachers were not debarred from holding any post or receiving any appointment allowance in the S.E.S. and (2) a teacher who was not eligible for a substantive appointment to specialist posts "in recognition of his proved ability and experience" might act in the post and draw the half allowance.⁶ This new ruling would therefore enable the Ministry to recruit some senior officers from the ranks of the non-graduate teachers.

The Inspectorate

According to McLellan, the Ministry had long felt a serious weakness of Singapore's education was "an almost complete lack of an Inspectorate". The few Inspectors in the Ministry were so "overwhelmed with minor but essential administrative duties that they have little

time left for their real work of Inspection".⁷ One serious obstacle to the formation of the Inspectorate was the acute shortage of experienced teachers.

The development of education in Singapore has been such that there is on the one hand a body of teachers in the English schools of whom a great majority are as yet inexperienced or still in training, and on the other hand an equally large body of teachers in Chinese schools with more experience but in most cases no training at all.⁽⁸⁾

An expanded Inspectorate, under such circumstances, would be an immediate necessity and its function would be to advise on teaching methods, class organisation, extra-curricular activities and also to organise refresher courses for teachers and for headmasters. Inspectors could be "an additional link between the different types of schools so that they will be the better able to profit from the good points of the others". It was the Ministry's intention to greatly expand the Inspectorate and the S.T.U. and the G.T.A. were invited in July 1955 to discuss McLellan's proposals⁹ for the expansion. His aims were to make the fullest use of the trained personnel.

There was only one issue on which the G.T.A. and the S.T.U. expressed similar views; they disagreed with the proposal to appoint one principal for both the morning and afternoon sessions of each school. This would halve the number of school principals required and lessen the chances of promotion for experienced teachers. It was utterly impossible for 1 principal to be put in charge of 2 schools to perform efficiently. And it was false economy as it would mean releasing the two Senior Assistants, one for the morning and the other for the afternoon, from part of their classroom work as they would have to help with school administration and an additional teacher or two would have to be employed. The principal's allowance, according to the G.T.A.

would have to be increased and therefore the saving effected by dropping one principal would surely be nullified by the extra payment of headship allowance and salary to one more teacher.¹⁰ McLellan's proposal nevertheless became policy.

The S.T.U. was in favour of retaining the Master/Mistress of Method in the primary school; this post, not provided for in the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme, nevertheless became an essential feature in the primary school since 1950. It was the contention of the S.T.U. that this post should carry with it a 'responsibility allowance'. The G.T.A. considered the post of Master/Mistress of Method a "redundant appointment".

It may be argued by Primary School Principals that supervision of trained teachers is limited to mere supervision whereas trainees have to be advised, criticised and directed, that their lesson notes have to be corrected and that they have practically to be tutored in addition to being supervised. It may also be maintained that whereas trained teachers in a school are limited to the precise number required to staff it, trainees are quite often about double that number. Moreover qualified teachers have been put through the mill, know their work and already have been harnessed to a sense of responsibility in their duties, but trainees have to be taught all these. These are formidable arguments in support of retaining the Master of Method. Nevertheless we contend that the additional work and responsibility which would come to Principals as the result of the abolition of Masters of Method would constitute a healthy challenge to their abilities and a ready acceptance of this challenge would not impose a severe strain on them but would help to raise the quality of work done by trainees. (11)

The S.T.U. which has always stood for the right of every teacher to rise to any of the important posts in the education service rejected McLellan's proposal of recruiting Inspectors mainly "from the ranks of principals and Masters of Methods but including some graduates".¹² Non-graduate classroom teachers should not be debarred from any posts that were available. The G.T.A. felt that it would be more prudent to build up by gradual stages an enlarged Inspectorate than to set up immediately a large body of inexperienced Inspectors.¹³ The problem,

as seen by the G.T.A., was first to fill 6 posts in order to supplement the existing Inspectorate staff. The G.T.A. did not agree that principals of primary schools and Masters/Mistresses of Method should have priority of consideration for selection of Inspectors in the first stage of constructing the Inspectorate staff. The role, as defined by the G.T.A., should be inspection not just of primary but also secondary schools.

We mean nothing disparaging about the abilities of primary school Principals and Masters/Mistresses of Method. It may be that some of them display great talents but the simple fact remains that by virtue of their academic and professional training, their experience has been limited to primary schools. To be able to inspect specialist teaching a high standard of academic knowledge is essential and such academic knowledge cannot be obtained in a few months or one year or two. (14)

Of the 6 posts, suggested as the essential preliminary to the building of the Inspectorate staff, 5 should be graduates ^{and} remaining 1 should go to a primary school principal ^{for graduates}. The lack of experience of work in primary schools of the graduate teacher was dismissed thus:

Although some graduates may not be able to adapt themselves to a lower pitch, it is reasonable to expect most graduates to be able to learn in a short while - three or four months - the technique of primary schools. (15)

In the second stage, as large a body of Assistant Inspectors as was required to deal with the business of inspecting should be appointed. And since this body was particularly concerned with the primary schools, opportunities should be given to all "Trained and Certificated Teachers", not necessarily to only primary school principals and Masters/Mistresses of Method. Normal trained teachers were not mentioned specifically as a group of teachers who could apply for senior posts.

The post of Master/Mistress of Method was abolished in 1956. All

McLellan's proposals were embodied in the White Paper on Education Policy, 1956.

The Ministry officials did not mind receiving deputations of representatives of teachers' unions. They would not want to give the impression that they were riding roughshod over the views of the 'professionals' and although no 'machinery' for consultation was instituted, their 'advice' would be listened to. But decisions and policies would be made by the Government. On the vexed question of promotions, the position was stated in a most categorical fashion by Lee Siow Mong when he met the representatives of teachers' unions in April, 1958.

So far as promotion posts are concerned the subject is not to be treated as a subject for negotiation. The final decision as to the actual number of posts for promotion must rest with the government. It is not a question of percentage of posts for the government. (16)

Promotion to senior posts rested on necessity based on the needs of the service and it was Government which determined the needs of the education service.

Specialist Appointments

The main concern of the G.T.A. after the publication of the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme was to secure specialist appointments for its members. This formed part of the general aim of its 'founding fathers' whose 'struggle' was described as one of gaining equitable salaries and equality of status with the expatriates in the colonial Education Service (C.E.S.). There was genuine fear that appointments to specialist posts would be blocked by the C.E.S. officers whose appointments were made by the Secretary of State, not by the Singapore Public Services Commission; there were also transfers of C.E.S.

officers - the superscale Education Officers from the Federation of Malaya - to fill top posts in the Colony's Education Department because of the link of the Singapore and Federation Establishments, a link that was not broken by the introduction of the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. In February, 1953, the G.T.A. Committee decided to ask the Director of Education to stop further recruitment into the C.E.S. and to stop transfers from outside Singapore into Singapore and requested that the C.E.S. officers be asked if they wished to convert from the C.E.S. Scheme to the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme and those who refused should be put on the transfer list.¹⁷ This was a recurrent theme for the next three years.

The 1953 S.E.S. scheme, based on Paper 103, was issued at the end of January, 1953 and was to be effective as from 1st January, 1950. It spelled out the specific details on specialist appointments and the allowances that went with them.

A committee, made up of the Deputy Director of Education, Heads of secondary schools and a G.T.A. representative, was appointed to look into the making of recommendations for posts carrying specialist allowances. This committee was in fact made up of the G.T.A. and the Education Department because the locally recruited principals of secondary schools belonged to the G.T.A. It enjoyed a consultative status to some degree. The non-graduate teachers, represented by the S.T.U., were debarred from holding any post or receiving any appointment allowances in the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme.

Great impatience was evinced over the delay in the implementation of the scheme with regard to the specialist appointments.

The G.T.A. should use all the powers given to it by its trade union status to fight for the rights of its members. (18)

The Acting Director of Education explained that he was doing his best to get the Scheme fully implemented. But there were "a few anomalies" to be cleared up with the P.S.C. before the Commission could proceed with the appointments. Assurances were given by the Acting Director that (a) the S.E.S. Scheme would not be scrapped and would be implemented until such time as a better scheme could be adopted to take its place; (b) payment of allowances under the schedules at the end of the S.E.S. Scheme would be effected as speedily as possible and (c) specialist appointments could be made as soon as the few anomalies had been cleared up.¹⁹

Specialist appointments for the locally recruited teachers were first announced in October, 1954. There was considerable dissatisfaction because the aided school teachers did not get any of the appointments. Perhaps this was one of the anomalies that had yet to be cleared. In February, 1955, some secondary school principals were appointed and it was only in May, 1955, that specialist appointments were made in the aided schools. There were many letters of complaints sent to the G.T.A. from members who expressed serious misgivings for having been overlooked.

Women teachers who could be considered for specialist appointments suffered under a disability if they were married. There would then be considered temporarily employed and would not be entitled to hold pensionable posts. In the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme, pensionable allowances formed part of the basic salary and the G.T.A. contended therefore that married women teachers should be entitled to the same basic salary as the unmarried women teachers. But according to the Colonial Regulations and General Orders, pensionable allowances were only payable in full to those holding pensionable posts. The P.S.C. was not prepared to admit

to the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme married women but they would be allowed to receive non-pensionable allowances when they were suitably qualified and when they were performing the required duties in the same way. Just as the underqualified teachers, they would be entitled to non-pensionable allowances of an amount equal to half the rate of the appointment allowance attached to any post.

The central figure in the fight for equal status with the expatriates was Ambiavagar. He was interested in making the G.T.A. the most powerful union of qualified teachers, capable of taking over the top posts in the Ministry from the officers in the C.E.S. At the end of the Extraordinary General Meeting on 16th April, 1955, he made a strong appeal to the members present "to make the Association live as a professional Association and to make government (whatever government) feel confident that the G.T.A. is a body capable of running the service without any fear of loss of efficiency".²⁰ The Ministry made its proposal known to the G.T.A. that non-graduate teachers would not be prevented from holding any post or receiving any appointment allowances in the 1953 S.E.S. The G.T.A. accepted the Ministry's proposal to the non-graduates only because its President, Ambiavagar "was given the assurance by the Ministry that there would be no liberal interpretation of it and that only in very rare cases would such appointments (of specialist allowance posts) be made".²¹ In a resolution, the G.T.A. said it favoured "the principle of non-graduate allowance posts up to Grade II".²² Not every non-graduate teacher was, however, eligible for promotion to the specialist posts; they were as far as possible to be restricted to members of the G.T.A., the elite group in the teaching service and, within the ranks of the G.T.A.,

priority for promotion should be given to those who were in continuous service in government English schools.

"Ritsonising"²³ the Specialist Allowances

The Director of Education invited representatives from the G.T.A. and the S.T.U. to discuss the matter of Ritsonising specialist allowances in the S.E.S. on the 9th February, 1955. Two weeks later he asked for applications for the posts of Examinations Secretary, Inspectors of Schools (English Branch) and Assistant Inspectors of Schools (English Branch). At the same time, he informed the S.T.U. and the G.T.A. that the P.S.C. had accepted the proposals for recognition of various specialist qualifications held by teachers on first appointment in government service and of additional qualifications obtained by teachers already in government service.²⁴

For the G.T.A., Ritsonising of the specialist allowances was a necessary step in view of the fact that superscales for officers in the C.E.S. had already been fixed.²⁵ Allowances in the S.E.S. were considered as supplementary to the time-scale in such a way that an officer in the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme would draw an emolument approximately equal to that of his counterpart of the same qualification and service in the C.E.S. The aspirations and arguments of the G.T.A. were not shared by the S.T.U. although its representative at the meeting on the 9th February, 1955 accepted the Ritsonised rates²⁶ proposed by the Ministry with the proviso that

1. the S.T.U. was unable to agree to the downgrading of the post of Inspector of schools to the level of specialist teacher Grade I and
2. if reserved the right to make further representations regarding the posts of Special Grades I, II, III and that of principals of primary schools. (27)

The allowances, to the S.T.U., were "Responsibility Allowances" since extra remuneration for added qualifications had already been provided for in the time-scales for the respective grades. As such, the allowances given should therefore be commensurate with the responsibility and status of each post.

What came in for criticism was the equalising of 'responsibility' through the offer of similar allowances by the Ministry in order to make it easy, from the point of view of administration, to transfer officers from one post to another. There was no division between administration and teaching as two distinct careers for teachers. This was described by the S.T.U. as a policy of expediency - the transferability of staff from one office to another.

In the existing rates of allowances, Inspectors of Schools and Principals of Primary schools are not remunerated fairly in comparison with specialists and the Principals of Secondary Schools.

A recent circular states the creation of a new post - Assistant Inspector of Schools (English Branch). We are dismayed to see that he is placed on the same level as a Specialist Teacher Grade II. This is bad for efficiency and wrong in principle. (28)

The S.T.U. also accused the Ministry of discrimination against the principals of primary schools. Different allowances were paid to principals or lady principals of a primary school, dependent on whether the school contained 11 classes or less than 11 classes whereas no mention was made of the minimum number of classes there should be for a principal or a lady principal of a secondary school to qualify for a particular allowance.

Even if the principal of a secondary school starts with just one Form Two (class) in his school, he immediately becomes eligible to draw the allowance for the Principal of a Secondary school with fewer than five streams. (29)

The post of Master/Mistress of Method since 1950 became an important feature in primary schools. As this post carried with it a "considerable amount of responsibility", the S.T.U. felt very strongly that teachers holding that appointment should be granted a responsibility allowance. In the secondary schools, the specialist teachers were paid an allowance. And, so ran the argument, if the Ministry did not see anything anomalous in paying a specialist teacher for teaching a subject he was originally engaged to teach, it should see nothing wrong in paying the Master/Mistress of Method.

The S.T.U. was in fact not interested in tinkering with allowances for specialist teachers who belonged to the G.T.A. The Union wanted all its members to be in the S.E.S. Scheme and was interested in a single professional scale for all teachers, everyone of whom would be entitled to be considered for all posts in the education service. Agreement on "ritsonisation" of specialist allowances for graduate teachers was an irrelevant issue, as far as the S.T.U. was concerned, but it widened the rift between the union and the G.T.A. and made the aim of a unified education service, espoused by the S.T.U. since 1947, a much more difficult task.

The central issue of the S.T.U. was the Normal Training Issue but the Ministry had given priority to the question of appointment and payment of specialist allowances to a small number of teachers in secondary schools.

There is a growing impression that the non-graduate teachers in the service are a class whose just claims can be ignored by the Ministry while representations made by other classes of teachers are given ready consideration. (30)

The implied criticism of the Ministry showing favouritism to the G.T.A. was not without justice. The main reason for G.T.A.'s

existence was to protect the interests of graduate teachers and to obtain the salaries and status of that of the expatriate officers in the C.E.S. It was not by any means plain sailing as 'obstacles had been created (by the Department) and hostility had been shown towards it in many quarters'.³¹ As a body of graduate teachers, it acted as a powerful pressure group and made its influence felt in the Ministry. In November, 1955, Ambiavagar resigned from his post in the G.T.A. because "his present post as Acting Deputy Secretary to the Ministry of Education was incompatible with his presidentship of the G.T.A."³² By May, 1956, the newly elected President at the 5th Annual General Meeting said:

Several of the Association members are sitting in high places in the Ministry and these members should look with sympathy on the aspirations of the Association. We should in fact be looking on the Ministry as our allies. (33)

Ambiavagar was elected as a committee member at the 5th Annual General Meeting. But he later informed the members of the Executive Committee that he should no longer be in the Committee as his official duties in the Ministry of Education might place him in a rather embarrassing position if he had to sit on the opposite camp at a meeting between officials in the Ministry and those of the Association. He expressed his willingness to give his support in an unofficial capacity and to attend meetings to which the Executive Committee might wish to invite him.

The G.T.A. had definite successes to its credit but it also had many bitter disappointments. The Ritsonised rates agreed to by the Ministry on the 9th February, 1955 were not implemented; this issue was for three years the subject of numerous representations and the recourse to the Civil Service Joint Council did not bring about any result. The

Honours Degree graduates, who had gone to the University on no-pay leave or on scholarship terms and suffered what they might have earned as remuneration, found to their dismay that they would not be given incremental credits. The matter was taken up as early as 1954 but the Ministry insisted that the graduates concerned had already benefited from being put on a higher maximum for Honours graduate teachers of \$1,000/-, instead of \$920/-. And there was nothing that the G.T.A. could do.

The Aided School Teachers

In 1954 the S.T.U. accepted the invitation of the M.A.S.C. to discuss with the representatives of the M.A.S.C. and the G.T.A. the question of "an equitable distribution of teachers giving both efficiency of education in Singapore and equality of opportunity of promotion for all English school teachers".³⁴ The meeting took place on the 14th September, 1954 and it was generally agreed that teachers should be generally transferable from the aided school to the government school and vice versa. A Register of Teachers should be drawn up, giving details of service and qualifications. Teachers from government or aided schools should be allowed to apply for vacancies of posts carrying specialist allowances in both government and aided schools and there should be no loss of increments on transfer in either direction. The posts should be advertised. It was also agreed that appointments to government schools should be made by the Government and to aided schools by the Aided School authorities as previously and that persons appointed to headships should have about 15 years of teaching experience but exceptions could be made.

The S.T.U. related the issue of transferability of teachers to

the 'unification' of the government service and the aided school service. At the discussion³⁵ with the Director of Education on 20th September, 1954, the M.A.S.C. representatives saw the short-term problem as one of releasing their experienced teachers to government schools but they had first to be approved by the Mission authorities concerned. The long term solution, as seen by M.A.S.C., was one involving all the proposals agreed to by the G.T.A., the S.T.U. and the M.A.S.C. on the 14th September, 1954 and these would take a long time to settle. The aided schools would not want to come completely under the control of Government in such matters as promotions, appointments, postings, and matters concerning conditions of work. All the issues concerning transferability had not yet been thoroughly threshed out by the M.A.S.C. but in the meantime it was prepared to second experienced aided schools teachers to service in government schools. The Director of Education stated that he would be willing to discuss the question if the M.A.S.C. was prepared to offer him experienced teachers.

The G.T.A. and the S.T.U. stressed the point that unless the principle of unification was accepted completely by the M.A.S.C., the proposal agreed to would not find favour with their respective unions. On the question of secondment of aided school teachers to government schools, the G.T.A. and the S.T.U. representatives doubted very much if their unions would accept half-measures.

The Director of Education then asked if the S.T.U. and the G.T.A. would agree if M.A.S.C. offered Government some of their experienced teachers for headships as was done in 1950.

Mr. Han (S.T.U.) requested that concrete proposals in this connection should be put up by the M.A.S.C. He did not know what his union's reactions would be but thought that they might prove acceptable.

Mr. Ambiavagar stated that if the proposals were acceptable to the majority of the members of the S.T.U., he felt that his Association would support them also. (36)

The meeting agreed that the M.A.S.C. should put up 'concrete proposals' offering experienced teachers to Government.

The S.T.U. Management Committee viewed the secondment or transfer of aided school teachers to Government schools as an opportunity to press for a complete unification of the education service. The 'concrete proposals' with the names of the teachers for secondment were seen as a 'detour' from their goal of unification by which all teachers should have the same chances of advancement to the highest posts in the service. F.C. Jones,³⁷ a committee member, was in favour of men and women of great experience and tried ability from aided primary schools being appointed principals in government schools. The S.T.U. should capitalise on this opportunity to advance the interests of aided school teachers.

The secondment of aided school teachers to headships in government schools would naturally come up against a great deal of opposition from government school teachers. Headships of primary schools were practically the only avenue of promotion for non-graduate teachers in government service; the specialist posts would only be held by graduate teachers. The Management Committee rejected "the concrete proposals" and passed a resolution thus:

Pending the receipt of concrete proposals from the Ministry for the complete unification of the education service, the S.T.U. is not in favour of the proposals put up by the M.A.S.C. (38)

The opportunities for promotion in aided schools were restricted because (1) there were fewer mission schools and they were full schools as they had developed long before there was any education planning;

(2) government schools existed as separate primary and secondary schools, secondary schools being developed later; (3) there was continual increase in the number of government schools whereas the number of mission schools remained almost static and (4) headships of Catholic mission schools were, however, not open to competition among lay candidates.

The Director of Education, writing to the Secretary, M.A.S.C. stated on 22nd November, 1954, thus:

It is felt that the aims of the Malayan Aided Schools Council might be met if some arrangement for full unification of the services could be made. If the Malayan Aided Schools Council would submit proposals for such unification, I should be interested to receive them. (39)

The S.T.U. had linked the issue of secondment to that of unification, described as the cornerstone of its policy. And it was ready to welcome any move that the M.A.S.C. would make on the question of unification.

The Ministry would not object in principle to there being only one service for teachers in the English schools. As the aided schools were mostly owned and managed by the Christian missions, the wishes of those in control had to be respected and although the Ministry would encourage the M.A.S.C. to get their missions to agree to propose a fusion, the move should come from them.

There were strong criticisms levelled at the S.T.U. For instance, 10 aided school teachers from Presbyterian Boys' School in a letter to the Management Committee expressed their "sadness and horror at the negative attitude of the Union to the question of fuller unification of the S.E.S.". But the S.T.U. was convinced of the correctness of its stand. In its reply to the aided school teachers, Williams, the

general secretary, said that as far as he could see, the S.T.U. would be prepared to reconsider the proposals agreed to on the 14th September, 1954.

The Secretary of the M.A.S.C. informed the S.T.U. on the 1st September, 1955 that proposals for the unification of the 2 services had been sent to the various Mission authorities for their study. However no concrete proposals were made. The truth was that the Mission authorities did not mind some of their experienced teachers being seconded to the important posts in the education service of the government as the opportunities for promotion in the aided schools were limited but it was another thing for the Mission authorities to be subject to control by government in all establishment matters, including the question of the transferability of teachers from one service to another. They were in fact against fusion. The government on the other hand was cautious on the question of fusion as it would undoubtedly involve a big financial burden which it was not prepared to shoulder as its expenditure on education was growing with the changes in educational provision as a result of increasing self-government. No conference, as suggested by the M.A.S.C. in January, 1957, was convened to work out final details of the unification by all the interested parties.⁴⁰ The unification of the 2 services in the English schools has not been seriously pursued since.

The largest number of trained and experienced teachers were to be found in the aided schools, whether English or Chinese. This was the result of the pre-war policy of the colonial government which did not build more schools but instead encouraged private and religious bodies to do so and that they did. The Malayisation Commission

concluded that it was unwise to Malayanise posts held by expatriate officers in the C.E.S. by promotion solely from the small pool of suitable government English school teachers. It recommended for the sake of harmony and efficiency that all administrative posts, when they fell vacant, should be openly advertised so that the best candidates, from government, aided or private schools, would be available for selection and appointment to these important posts.⁴¹

The S.T.U. wanted to be assured on a few points which arose from the publication of the White Paper on Education Policy, setting out Government's own policy on Malayanisation. The S.T.U. said that its aided school members would like an assurance that on transfer from aided school service to government service, there would be no loss of increments; they would like an assurance that the phrase in the White Paper "other things being equal, preference would be given to Government teachers" would not be interpreted so that a less able government teacher was appointed in preference to a more suitable aided school teachers. The Ministry gave the S.T.U. the assurances it needed.

The Aided Teachers and the G.T.A.

In June, 1958, 2 aided teachers were appointed to superscale posts in the Ministry. Government school teachers in the G.T.A. were dissatisfied and an Emergency Meeting of the G.T.A. was called. The President explained that the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, had told him that the P.S.C. had considered them the most suitable candidates. This was part of the policy of allowing the transfer of aided school teachers to facilitate the implementation of the White Paper on Education Policy (1956) and the G.T.A. could not do anything about it.⁴² Besides the two successful candidates were members of the

G.T.A.

The G.T.A. members, who were present at the meeting, were agreed generally that aided school teachers had greater advantages than government teachers who were restricted by Colonial Regulations and General Orders. They were not prevented from engaging in public discussion of controversial issues and in political activities which would place them in the public eye. The White Paper on Education Policy, 1956, stated that aided school teachers who had taken an active part in politics could not be considered for superscale posts. This fact escaped the members of the G.T.A. at the meeting.

It was Chan Chieu Kiat's opinion that since Government might be expected to make more of similar promotions in future, the Government should extend the application of the General Orders to aided school teachers, who were in fact paid by Government although employed directly by the Malayan Aided Schools Council. (43)

This suggestion to circumscribe the activities outside school of aided school teachers was not taken up. The status of the teaching profession in Singapore can be said to have been depressed by the fact that the growing number of teachers are civil servants with all the restrictive rules and it would indeed be a retrograde step to force the rules on the aided school teachers.

Malayanisation

With the proclamation of the principles of recruitment in Colonial White Paper No. 197, emphasising competitive selection based on qualifications, merit and experience and appointments of locally recruited officers to the greatest possible extent, the resentment against the expatriates in the civil service was intensified. The various schemes of service to implement the recruitment policy did not lead to an increasing substitution of locally recruited teachers

for the expatriates in the education service nor was the education system adapted to local conditions. All the most important posts in the education service were still held by members of the C.E.S. when the Malayanisation commission was appointed on the 4th August, 1955. The non-graduate teachers, particularly the Normal trained teachers, saw their way to senior posts blocked by the disability clause in the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. The G.T.A. was engaged in the struggle for equitable salaries and equality of status with the expatriates but it was not inspired by the ideas of one service, established so that teachers may, if found suitable, rise to the most responsible posts irrespective of paper qualifications, race or sex - ideas espoused by the S.T.U. since 1947 and which would, it hoped, establish the education service on a fair and proper basis and attract the best people to it. The Normal trained teacher was left 'out' of the education service in the Recruitment White Paper No. 69 of 1949 and also 'out' of the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. The G.T.A. was not sympathetic to the cause of the Normal trained teachers to the extent of agreeing with their proposition that all teachers should be given "full and free opportunity for promotion in the service to all posts".

But while the G.T.A. enjoyed a consultative status of a sort vis-a-vis the Ministry about promotions and specialist appointments in the S.E.S., it had no power to stop expatriates from occupying the key posts in the service. It was extremely sensitive about the status of its graduate members and resented any impression that all expatriate officers were higher in status than the locally recruited graduates. An occasion to which the G.T.A. gave vent to its feelings was the publication of the Singapore Establishment List on 1st April, 1955.

There were "gross inaccuracies in the pages relating to the Ministry of Education". In its letter, the "unmannerly tone" of which was deplored by the Director of Education, the G.T.A. said that the errors displayed an "utter ignorance of the detail and meaning" of the 1953 Singapore Education Service Scheme and anyone, including the Minister of Education, "if he has not made a separate and special study of the Scheme", would be misled into thinking that local graduates were not qualified enough or eligible to compete with the expatriate officers for the key posts in the Ministry.⁴⁴ The inaccuracies were enumerated thus:

1. In the list of Division I, Education Officers (Men) the four Asian officers who were on it were, by having their names put down at the very end, made to appear to be less in status than even the most junior expatriate.
2. All graduate teachers were classified as Division II officers and listed below all expatriate officers. In point of fact, in the Singapore Education Service, Honours Degree graduates, after crossing the first bar, and Pass Degree graduates, after passing the second bar, were Division I officers.
3. The names of principals of four-stream secondary schools were obscurely jumbled up with the names of Specialists and teachers on scale salaries and their appointment allowances "were of more significance than the date of last return from leave of an expatriate officer or whether he was studying Malay or Mandarin".
4. Appointment allowances, which were pensionable and therefore as much substantive emoluments as scale salaries, had been ignored.

In reply, McLellan conceded that "most of the criticisms" made of the Establishment List were justified and said that the Establishment Office would be asked to amend the mistakes in future issues. But he emphasised that there had been neither in intention nor in fact any discrimination against the local graduates. The Association was then assured that the Minister had not been misled by any of the factors to be taken into account in assessing claims of local officers to promotion

to responsible posts.⁴⁵

There was great dissatisfaction over the delay in the appointment of specialist teachers and secondary school principals. The appointment allowances granted to the G.T.A. members were regarded as an indication of their "struggle" for equal status with the expatriates and the omission of the allowances granted to the teachers in the List "indirectly blots out from the minds of those who look through the Establishment List the recognition of the true status of Principals and specialists".⁴⁶ Was it because the Ministry was reneging on its promise to implement the Ritsonised conversion of the allowances, rates for which had already been agreed to by the Association? According to McLellan the Minister was not unwilling to get on with the appointment of specialists in aided and government schools and the delay was caused by 2 reasons - (1) the aided schools themselves hindered the work "by asking for continual revision of their proposals" and (2) "the Government's reply on proposals for appointments to government allowance posts had been awaited for more than 3 months".⁴⁷ Government had also delayed making supplementary provision to cover the increased cost of Ritsonising the allowances. There was nothing that the Ministry officials could do but wait.

The G.T.A. then declared that it had "incontrovertible evidence to show that at every stage of the (S.E.S.) Scheme, compulsion was brought to bear on the Department from the Governor": McLellan was not interested in the 'evidence', wrote the G.T.A., but thought fit to read the G.T.A. a homily on guiding principles - "the efficiency of the service as a whole and subject to that overruling consideration, justice for all officers". He would respectfully suggest that the G.T.A. adopt the guiding principles.⁴⁸

It had always been the contention of the G.T.A. that the locally recruited graduate teachers were in no way inferior to expatriate officers and "if anything some of them have shown very commendable zeal in their work because they think and work for the advancement of a society of which they are part and parcel and not birds of passage whose first consideration is only their own material advancement".⁴⁹

By August, 1955, there were two locally recruited officers who were working in superscale posts and a few locally recruited officers holding gazetted posts of Inspectors of Schools and Principals. The Government declared its intention to Malayanise the education service in four years. The G.T.A. President was confident that as a body of the best qualified teachers, it was capable of running the education service without any fear of loss of efficiency. It set itself up as the planning unit outside the Ministry; it assumed great authority and importance in its plan of building up the Inspectorate and in working out the graduate staffing of secondary schools for the Ministry and a common seniority list for all Pass and Honours Graduates in Division I; and in the addendum of its memorandum to the Malayanisation Commission, it declared that it was prepared to propose names of senior officers who would be competent to fill all the various administrative posts.

The lack of an adequate number of locally recruited officers with administrative experience to fill all the superscale posts was considered as a relatively simple problem. The G.T.A. had sufficient members with the requisite qualifications for such superscale posts that existed. The problem of training the technical cadres and building up the staff at the T.T.C. could be overcome well within the period of 4 years set for the complete Malayanisation of the education service. The problem,

as seen by the Malayanisation Commission, was not so much in Malayanising the service but in keeping it Malayanised. The tremendous expansion in the service in the next four years would create a great number of senior positions that could not all be filled by the locally recruited personnel.

The G.T.A. did not evidently press its stand on who should occupy the superscale posts (apart from that of the Permanent Secretary) before the Malayanisation Commission.

... Neither the Government teachers nor the Permanent Secretary were prepared to say, however, that only graduates should hold such posts. They were of the opinion that every teacher should have the opportunity of holding any post as long as he was suitable for it and that the absence of a degree should not bar anyone from reaching the highest ranks. It appeared that given opportunities to acquire administrative experience, whether by acting in the posts or understudying the present holders, all the posts could be filled by selected officers in the near future. (50)

But something beyond general competence was required. The changes in functions and character of the superscale jobs because of increasing self-government should be understood. In all its memoranda and Bulletins, the G.T.A. did not show any grasp of the radical social thinking and social theorising that was going on, not just with regard to the issues of vernacular education (especially Chinese). The general political and social aims of education were resolved over the heads of the G.T.A. members and in response to the exigencies of the situation in which Singapore **found** itself. Beyond sounding warnings about the threat to English education and appealing to members "to cast aside all smug feelings", the G.T.A. Presidents in turn were not able to make the association a truly professional one. There was a suggestion that people interested in education but not directly connected with it should be invited to engage in educational research. But no close and

critical examination and study on any aspect of education was ever undertaken by the G.T.A. There was not even a continuous and critical commentary on issues of public education throughout its eight years of existence. Establishment matters within the colonial framework absorbed all their energies. The G.T.A. was a small elite group, completely divorced from the stirrings of politics and the wider social issues of the times but preoccupied with the questions of status and salary vis-a-vis the expatriates and with replacing them.

The S.T.U., on the other hand, had been alive to the social and political changes taking place in society and was not afraid of the position of English education in the face of the relentless movement towards parity of esteem for Chinese education and language. It was able to expand their idea of a unified education service to incorporate the other parallel streams of education, namely Chinese, Malay and Tamil, and was enthusiastic about nation-building based on "a Singapore-centred loyalty and a Malayan consciousness".

Malayanisation of the education service was to be like a game of musical chairs, played by the G.T.A. members. The colonial set-up, outlook and values were not examined critically and a new definition and concept of their authoritative role was not worked out. A teacher writing in the Teachers' Forum, the organ of the S.T.U., tried to work out the qualities of a good educational administrator, who would emerge with Malayanisation. Should he feel that unless he exerted his newly acquired authority he would not receive the respect and attention which were accorded to his colonial predecessors? The S.T.U. was not concerned with a question like that.

A serious weakness of the administrative system of the Ministry

was its limited character. Within the system, it carried out its own education policy in an efficient manner. But with the progress towards self-government, it had to face a multitude of problems which it previously neglected. During the life of the Rendel Constitution, there was response made to the great pressures building up outside the Ministry and changes were made to the administrative structure. The real challenge to the professional administrators came in the second half of 1959 when new policies, commendable by themselves, were implemented - the start of the "decolonisation" process in school, a decolonisation based broadly on nation-building. The lack of advanced skills, thought unnecessary in the colonial set-up, to work out the effects of the new policies and evaluate them and the outlook inherited under colonial rule affected the growth and influence of education.

The S.T.U. - G.T.A. Relations

The question of promotion was the subject of lengthy and bitter controversy between the Ministry and the G.T.A. The attitude of the G.T.A. was one of status hostility to the expatriates in the C.E.S. and in its narrow and sectarian approach to graduate interests, it embittered relations with the S.T.U. The G.T.A. was generally unsympathetic to the S.T.U.'s anxiety with regard to the status of the Normal trained teachers vis-a-vis the Certificated teachers and to the lack of a definite channel for promotion of the Normal trained teachers. It was not without justice that the S.T.U. claimed that the G.T.A. was blocking the chances of the Normal trained. The G.T.A. even asked the Director of Education that primary school headships be considered as open to graduate teachers and it was approved "though it was recognised by all that the exigencies of the service might make it difficult or even

impossible at the present time to make any such appointments".⁵¹ The emphasis of the G.T.A. on university qualifications for senior positions in the education service, - sometimes unexpressed, as in its submission to the Malayisation Commission - the poor regard with which it held the non-graduate teachers and the graduates with Indian degrees and the educational politics its leaders indulged in all served to build up the image of a calculating and ruthless machine, bent on manoeuvring itself into, so its leaders hoped, the key positions in the Ministry.

The object at which the S.T.U. members vented its bitter frustrations - with the Ministry, the G.T.A. and the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme - was the specialist teacher who received an allowance over and above the salary he was first paid for his university degree. The announcement of the Supplementary List of specialist appointments, 1956 and the 1957 List on 14th July, 1958 was commented on in its News Release thus:-

They will be receiving arrears amounting to thousands of dollars. Many of you work very hard and yet are ignored. Some of you do the same job - for example, teaching Forms V and VI - yet you receive a smaller wage packet because you are an Indian Graduate or a Certificated Teacher or a Normal trained teacher. The disparity and anomalies are there. There must be remedies. (52)

The specialist allowances were 'removed' in April, 1959. They were removed in name only - 'camouflaged', as the S.T.U. commented, by consolidation into the basic salaries.

The caste attitude of the G.T.A. and the 'privileges' of its members caused some caustic remarks to be made about them in the Editorial of the Teachers' Forum:

A graduate is not always a better teacher than the Normal Trained. Each is a specialist in his own level of education. The Scheme (1953 S.E.S.) is functional. It is not an arrangement of enclosed preserves where a section enjoys privileged treatment. The biased assertion of importance in degree qualifications has wrecked the operation of the scheme with

the result that top positions in the Ministry are considered the birth right of only graduates. (53)

An attempt was made by the G.T.A. to bring the teachers' unions together in order to present a common approach to problems that concerned the whole profession. But the distrust and the antagonism they felt towards each other was not conducive to a get-together.

On the initiative of the S.T.U., a meeting of representatives from the G.T.A. and the Certificated Teachers' Association was called to discuss the subject of re-organisation of the Ministry, the new posts created and the manner by which they were filled. The 3 specific issues were thus:

1. There was confusion in the titles used in Ministry circulars.
2. The lack of any understandable basis on which officers were selected to officiate in posts.
3. The length of the 'officiating' period.

'Officiating' appointments tended to give their holders an advantage when the vacancies were advertised because they would have the experience that counted in the eyes of the P.S.C. There were four secondary schools with an officiating principal at each and these officiating principals were not given any acting allowance as senior officers were entitled to. The posts were, however, described by the Permanent Secretary as "temporary".

The attitude of the G.T.A. to the invitation by S.T.U. to join it and the Certificated Teachers' Association in a joint discussion with the Ministry was shown in the following extract from the Minutes of the Executive Council Meeting of the G.T.A. in April, 1957:

... the general opinion was that the Ministry should not be queried on 1 and 3. As regards 2, four out of nine committee members were of the opinion that the Ministry should not be questioned. Major Thong stated that the Director of Education

had the right and authority to appoint officiating officers in the manner he thought fit. Mr. Ngui Jiu Chiang suspected that the S.T.U. might have an ulterior motive for wanting the interview. The Secretary said that it was pointless to continue with the discussion as the consensus of opinion was against sending G.T.A. representatives to the joint interview. (54)

CHAPTER 11

THE 1958 S. E. S. SCHEME (ENGLISH SCHOOLS)

The first indication that a new salary scheme for teachers was afoot was given by the Government in a statement it made on 11th June, 1957.¹ It said that the prevailing 1953 S.E.S. Scheme was not as tidy as it should be and that Government was doing all it could to bring about a more efficient and workable scheme as soon as possible. At the same time, it warned that any claim for an increase in salary at this stage would be resisted in view of the high cost of the administration. The proposed scheme was based on the key scales adopted by the Establishment Office for the whole civil service. Teaching was not recognised as having any extraordinary characteristics and necessitating its own special conditions. The Establishment Office which determined the conditions of work and salaries of all grades of civil servants had now prescribed the conditions of work and salaries of teachers and was not prepared to entertain any changes in the salary scales as its overriding aim was to rationalise the existing salary scales in the different branches of the civil service by equating them to certain key scales and in so doing effect a measure of economy.

However it was no easy task to classify the officers in the education service. This was admitted in a memorandum circulated by the Official Side of the Singapore Civil Service Joint Council, on the

subject of classification of the civil service, two years before the 1958 Scheme.

It is not intended that these proposals should apply to the officers of the education service since the method of remunerating them differs from the normal structure and their classification into divisions is laid down in the relevant scheme of service. (2)

The 1958 Scheme was to correct the situation. Every cog in the wheel of the administration must be in place and uniformly graded and classified. For instance, the General Clerical Services would get the Cambridge School Certificate scale and so teachers with the Cambridge School Certificate would get the Cambridge School Certificate scale to start with. But when the S.T.U. representative said that, as teachers, their responsibilities were greater, the reply was that the Government would pay the same salary to all with the Cambridge School Certificate. It was this type of official logic that produced the following statement by the Establishment Officer thus:

If you could produce a good reason why the existing schemes should be changed for the whole Public Service then the change would be effected not just for teachers but also executive officers, police officers, customs officers, etc. We contemplated that you might pick up defects and anomalies which could be removed. We do not claim that the salary scales that we propose are perfect but if you can produce good reasons to have the whole scheme revised for all branches of the service, we might consider. You must remember the teachers are only one branch of the Government service. (3)

The New Pay Scheme brought, for the first time, all the teachers in the English and Malay schools together; no other issues in the past ever succeeded in bringing about such a display of teachers' solidarity. In its joint memorandum,⁴ there was a strong declaration that they all belonged to one service and owed loyalty to one another. Different qualifications, they said, did not by themselves cause the caste mind in education but "the strategy that plays one body against another, that

exploits the weak and gives in to the strong, that resorts to delaying tactics to fog an issue, that permits very wide disparities in emoluments for officers doing identical work and above all sacrifices principles for the exigencies of the moment".⁵ Their aim, as they saw it, was to get the acceptance by the Government of their unified salary scale, worked out by all the teachers' unions and associations in such a way that it would free all teachers from frustration and humiliation and it would "stand the test of trying times".

For the first time too, all the teachers' representatives agreed on the principles which have always formed the basis of the agitation and the numerous representations of the S.T.U. for a unified education service. However the rigid application of the principles was not possible. A common salary scale was drawn up. Based on what was considered a fair living wage for the Normal trained teacher as his qualification was taken as the basic qualification for teachers in English schools, the teachers' representatives then worked upwards to fix a salary for those with extra qualifications.

When fixing these salaries the guiding principle shall be that the difference in the initial and the maximum can only be marginal. To allow a wide difference is to defeat the aim of unification. (6)

In the basic scale⁷ proposed by the teachers' representatives, the Honours Graduate teacher would start at 14 increments above that of the Normal trained teacher and receive almost double the salary of the Normal trained teacher and his maximum would be double that of the Normal trained teacher. The Honours graduate teacher would start with 12 increments above that of the Certificated teacher, and 5 above that of the Pass Degree teacher. In other words, the salary fixed for the Honours graduate teacher did not bear "a proper relationship with one

another and to the salary of the teachers with the basic qualification". This could not be helped as the Honours graduates commanded higher salaries and status at the start of his career in any other branch of the civil service.

There was an implied criticism of the Honours Graduate teacher in the editorial of Teachers' Forum thus:

There is no place in the Unified Education Service scheme for a scheme of salaries where the initial of a higher post is about double that of the ordinary, and the maximum twice that of the other. (8)

The length of the time scale for each category of teachers was fixed uniformly at 18 years in the proposed salary scale of the teachers' representatives. The maximum salary on the time scale was fixed in such a way "that even those who cannot qualify for promotion can find incentive to improve themselves professionally and stagnate, if they have to, at a reasonable maximum". Yearly increments were the same for every teacher at any point on the common salary scale because they believed that increments were for work done, not for paper qualifications.

An important assumption in the basic scale for all qualified teachers was that every teacher, with a degree or without, male or female, from a government or a government aided school, be it Chinese, Malay or Tamil, could rise to the highest posts within the education service.

The teachers' proposed basic scale, applicable to all qualified teachers, was dismissed out of hand by Lee Siow Mong thus:

... the scheme proposed by you is disappointing because it is not something that has been built on the standard scales but it is something entirely of your own and it means an increase in expenditure. (9)

The new proposals of the Establishment Office for recruits to teaching made "sense" because the separate scales of salary, which previously

existed separately from the key scales in the civil service and separately negotiated by the G.T.A. and the S.T.U. for English School teachers, were now unalterably fixed to the key scales in the whole civil service.

The teachers' representatives lacked the power to achieve professional status but they shared a common concern for the teaching service. Selection of recruits to the service, they stressed, should be done with "discrimination and care" and an urgent request was made to the Ministry that it should stop recruiting untrained teachers unless it was intended to provide training facilities for them. The multifarious problems of teachers were clearly set out and discussed in terms of a unified education service.

However this new-found unity of teachers did not survive for long. The President of the G.T.A. was taking steps to form a federation of teachers' unions. There was support for the idea at the 7th Annual General Meeting of the G.T.A.¹⁰ The aims, as explained by the President, were to advance the interests of teachers, both professionally and culturally. Inter-union rivalry was bad and had resulted, as in the past, in some teachers being treated as poor relations, others ignored while still others had been patted on the back. (This was the time when the old stalwarts of the G.T.A. were occupying some of the important posts in the Ministry). The Government, the President went on to say, would not brook any opposition and it was its view that the teachers were so overpaid that the teaching service was attracting 'undesirables'. Views of teachers were not respected.

The S.T.U. stood away from the proposed federation, under the leadership of the G.T.A., and the close relations that existed for the

purpose of putting up a joint front to the 1958 Scheme vanished long before the year was out.

The S.T.U. and the other civil service unions affiliated to the Civil Service Joint Council were too weak to prevent the Establishment Branch of the civil service from applying the New Pay Scheme to all new entrants to the civil service. The Official Side of the Joint Council was determined to push through the New Pay Scheme regardless of the opposition to the proposed changes. In the process, the weakness of the Joint Council machinery was exposed as there was not even the pretence of negotiation not to say of arbitration when the New Pay Scheme for teachers became, to all intents and purposes, the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme (English Schools).

There were 4 major revisions of salaries of teachers for civil servants after the 2nd World War but on every occasion, there was what appeared to be a neutral commission or committee appointed by the Advisory Council or its successor the Legislative Council. Representatives from all staff associations and unions were invited and the final proposals of the neutral commission would be subject to debate in the Council. No major revision was made to appear that it was imposed on Government employees without prior consultation with them. Representations were even entertained after the approval by the legislature.

The New Pay Scheme was released to the members of the Civil Service Joint Council as Government proposals. In the case of the teachers, counter proposals were put up jointly by the teachers' unions and associations in the hope of securing a unified service but they were rejected out of hand. The new S.T.U. Management Committee¹¹

reminded the Chief Minister, the Minister for Education and the Staff Side of the Singapore Civil Service Joint Council that the problem of teachers' salaries and the case of the Normal trained teachers had been grossly neglected and asked for action.

This renewed vigour on the part of S.T.U. managed to move the unwieldy machinery of government and the movement resulted in official circles looking for the relevant files and documents and hurriedly preparing the tables promised. After strenuous efforts and much overtime, the Government, flushed with pride and joy at their achievement, called the various unions to a presentation ceremony. (12)

On the 2nd October, 1958, the S.T.U., the G.T.A. and the Singapore Malay Teachers' Union were presented with a 'new' scheme. The S.T.U. categorically rejected it as it was the exact duplicate of the rejected Scheme given in March, 1958. On the 15th October, 1958, S.T.U. representatives met the Official Side of the Joint Council and "after a lengthy discussion, the meeting ended on a hopeful note"¹³ as the Establishment Officer assured the S.T.U. that he would consider the Union's counter-proposals and then refer them to the Council of Ministers. But nothing came out of it.

Resentment against the Establishment Office for the 'cook-up' began to swell. "A number of civil servants in the Establishment" were the culprits. "Civil servants can never understand the difference in the nature of work in an office where they write minutes and letters", and did not understand the nature of work involved in the classroom and in extra-curricular activities.¹⁴ The G.T.A. too showed the same resentment against the Establishment Office; the education service did not deal with files and orders but with life matter, no two units of which were the same. While most other services carried out the letter of the law, the Singapore Education Service, the G.T.A. said, was

entrusted with the task of laying the foundation for nation-building - "it is committed to giving inspiration, guidance, direction, training and education to the future citizens and leaders of the country".¹⁵

The Editor of the Teachers' Forum had this to say:

Time and time again, experts on salaries have declared that payment for work should be based on the principle of the rate for the job. Yet the government has put forward new salaries for teachers and told them that the old teachers can remain in their previous salaries and that new teachers must go under lower scales. Therefore there are to be 2 rates of pay for the same type of work and for people with identical qualifications. This is a desparate and illogical measure taken in the name of the government. (16)

What was purported to be a tentative scheme for the education service was rejected by all the teachers' representatives. Nevertheless Lee Siow Mong stated that the Establishment scheme would be implemented for new entrants to the service, regardless of the objections from the teachers. The Government assumed that the teachers' representatives had no say under what terms Government would engage recruits although the depressed time scales in the Establishment scheme did in fact devalue the Normal Training Certificate, the Teacher's Certificate and the professional qualifications of the Pass Degree graduate.

The recruits to Normal training would get less during the 3-year period of training; the scale for qualified Normal trained teachers was a much lower one, with 3 efficiency bars instead of one as in the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme and the women were much worse of.¹⁷ And if the Normal trained teachers chose to convert to the 1958 salary scale, there was a possibility that they would reach the new low maximum earlier and thereafter stagnate at \$655 per month for men and at \$525 per month for women until they retired.¹⁸ Not a single Normal trained teacher converted to the 1958 Scheme. An effect on conversion was having to

sit and pass the examinations for Standard I and General and Departmental Regulations for confirmation in the Scheme.

There was much bitterness when comparisons were made between the Certificate course trainee and the Normal trainee. The Certificate course trainee, who was full-time, would receive under the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme \$152/- per month (instead of \$100/- per month under the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme) while the Normal trainee would receive \$152/- per month as a part-time trainee, with a work load in school (instead of \$175/- per month as obtained previously).

Transition

On 30th November, 1959, the Vanniasingham Report making detailed recommendations for the introduction of a single system of part-time teacher training, applicable to all language media, was submitted. Its recommendations were implemented the following year. The full-time Certificate course and the part-time Normal training course were abolished and the Certificate in Education course was introduced because, apart from administrative convenience, "it would remove existing grounds for professional jealousy and secure uniformity of training".¹⁹ In making its recommendations for the three-year part-time Certificate in Education (C. in E.) course, the Vanniasingham Committee was "guided throughout by the consideration that there should be no lowering of standards", especially in view of the fact that the full-time Certificate course was recognised in the United Kingdom for purposes of admission to further training. A standard of instruction not inferior to that obtaining in the full-time Certificate course was to be achieved and maintained.²⁰

However the Certificate in Education (part-time) that was introduced in 1960 was devalued as its holders were paid on the ?

depressed scale of the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme.²¹

3 groups of non-graduate teachers were affected by the transition to the C. in E. course. They were **as follows:**

1. The 1st group was made up of teachers admitted into the 1st Year Normal training in January, 1958. In 1960 when they had already undergone the 2nd Year of their training, they were incorporated into the new C. in E. course. They passed in December, 1960.
2. The 2nd group was made up of teachers admitted to the full-time Certificate course for the years 1958-1960. In January, 1960, they had already completed $1\frac{1}{2}$ years of their 2-year full-time training course. They graduated in June, 1960, after 6 months of part-time training.
3. The 3rd group comprised teachers admitted to the full-time Certificate course for the years 1959-1961. In January, 1960, they had completed 6 months of their course. They graduated in June, 1961. The duration of their training was still 2 years although they did $1\frac{1}{2}$ years of part-time training.

With regard to the first group, the December '60 group, the appropriate salary scale had to be determined. As Normal trained teachers, they would be entitled to the scale of \$325 x 15A - 490/Bar/530 x 20A - 690;²² as Certificated Teachers they would be entitled to the scale of \$365 x 20A - 405 x 25A - 480/Bar/530 x 25A - 780.²³ They were paid on the scale for the Certificated teachers up to September, 1962, but in October, 1962, they were placed on the lower scale for Normal trained teachers in the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. The struggle of the 500 teachers involved to be put back on the Certificated teachers' scale was a fierce, protracted and acrimonious one and competed for priority treatment with the Normal Training Issue, which was still unresolved. And in the meantime, the discontent of the C. in E. teachers was growing, with greater intensity each year.

The 2 other groups of non-graduate teachers were placed on the depressed 1958 S.E.S. Scheme for C. in E. teachers. They expected to

be placed on the Certificated teachers' scale in the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. They had already been engaged as recruits in their 2-year full-time training before the details of the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme were even finalised; even as late as October, 1958, the Establishment Office assured the S.T.U. that its counter-proposals would be considered.

When the Government arrived at the decision to implement the proposed S.E.S. 1958 Scheme, this decision was arrived at only after the teachers had begun their training ... no application forms were offered nor were new contracts signed with the trainees. Our Union regards this as UNFAIR. The Government, at the least, should have given the trainees a chance to decide whether they were prepared to continue their courses with the change of conditions. (24)

And what was considered unfair and arbitrary was the effective date of implementation of the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. It was first implemented in January, 1960 but the effective date was fixed on the 1st May, 1958. The S.T.U. complained that when the date was set, "consideration should have been given to those batches of trainees and the date line should have in all justice been advanced to accommodate them so that they could have been emplaced on the old scheme".²⁵

The S.T.U. later²⁶ espoused the case of Pass Degree graduate teachers who were appointed between the years 1958-1961. Many of them received teaching bursaries, an indication that they intended to join the education service on completion of their university course. At the time they entered into an agreement with the Government, the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme was in operation. Not unnaturally they expected to be placed on a salary scale that was not inferior to that of the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. The Certificated teachers, whose training was from the years 1957 to 1959, were put on the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme but the bursary holders in the 1958-1961 group were not considered eligible for the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. In a memorandum setting out the grievances of this group of graduate

teachers, the S.T.U. said thus:

There is serious and genuine discontentment and unhappiness in the Education Service today. The bursary holders in the 1958-1961 group are dissatisfied enough to suggest that if the Ministry refuses to correct the anomalous position that they have been forced into, then they should be allowed the choice to leave the service without any further obligations although all of them are genuinely interested in teaching as a career. (27)

The case of the non-graduate and the graduate (Pass Degree) teachers who were affected by the transition to the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme was presented in countless memoranda but as far as the Ministry was concerned official decisions, which proved beneficial to the government, would not be reversed, whether justified or not. However decisions were reversed if they effected some measure of economy for the government.

Graduate Teachers

There has always been a serious shortage in respect of graduate teachers to staff the secondary schools, especially in the upper secondary classes (secondary 3, 4, Pre-University I & II). From 1957 to 1963,²⁸ the school enrolment went up by 65%, i.e., from 260,000 to 430,000. While the primary school enrolment showed an increase of 54% the secondary school enrolment showed an increase of about 33%. This was the result of the rapid expansion of the secondary schools to meet the demand from the large increase in the number of primary school pupils. But during the period under review, the growth in number of secondary school teachers from 1957 (about 1,500) to 1963 (about 3,000) did not keep pace with the growth in enrolment; enrolment increased by about 133 per cent in 1963 over that of 1957 but the number of secondary school teachers increased by only 100 per cent; the pupil/teacher ratio increased from 24.8 in 1957 to 29.2 in 1963. In theory, secondary

schools should be staffed by graduate teachers but Normal trained and Certificated teachers were called upon to teach in secondary schools.

The 2nd Report of the Education Advisory Board's Science Staffing Sub-Committee 1961 highlighted the grave shortage of graduate teachers in science and mathematics in the upper secondary classes in the government and the aided English schools.²⁹ The Sub-Committee selected 20 secondary schools. It found that there were 23 non-graduate teachers doing the work of graduate teachers in the government schools and in the case of the aided schools 21 non-graduate teachers were engaged in teaching mathematics and science in the upper secondary classes. And should there be any cause to replace the Indian graduates serving in the schools under survey, then the number of graduate teachers required would be considerably more than the numbers quoted. The shortage, it reported, had been enhanced by the resignations particularly by the newly recruited graduates and also by the fact that the University was not producing enough graduates to meet the demands of Singapore. The Sub-Committee was pessimistic about the recruitment of graduate teachers in a large enough number to fill all the teaching posts in the upper secondary classes in both the government and the aided schools. It stated that the supply of graduate teachers from the University was not likely to improve under the prevailing conditions of service offered to graduate teachers.

Since the Government was expanding the number of secondary schools to meet the demands of the rapidly growing population, more and more graduate teachers would be needed. The situation would further deteriorate unless positive steps were taken to make teaching a more attractive profession. It was the opinion of the Sub-Committee that

the salary scales of teachers needed immediate revision; the question of salaries, emphasised the Sub-Committee, was of fundamental importance and graduates would be attracted to teaching if there was sufficient financial inducement.

The lower secondary classes (Secondary I and II) have always been staffed with non-graduate teachers. It is difficult to envisage a day when all the secondary schools would be staffed by graduate teachers. There has been a growing demand for personnel with educational qualifications (particularly at university level) in the commercial and industrial sectors and because of the increasing variety of occupations calling for higher levels of education and training, the competitive demand of graduates, who might otherwise have entered the teaching service, is increasing with every passing year. The graduates, particularly male graduates, have been attracted to the Government departments, other than teaching, because the conditions of service, remuneration and prospects have always been better.

There was no doubt that the consequences of the shortage of suitably trained teachers would be serious. The teaching load increased, leading to lowered standards in the classroom, poor morale and subsequently lowered the status of the teacher and lessened the prestige of education as a whole. Another consequence of this was the recruitment of teachers who were unsuitable and of poor quality.

The wide difference in salaries between Honours and Pass Degree teachers was the cause for the shortage of Pass Degree teachers.

1958 S.E.S. Scheme

	with Diploma in Education or Certificate in Education	without Diploma in Education or Certificate in Education
Honours Degree Graduates	\$605-\$1,260	\$465-\$655
Pass Degree Graduates	\$385-\$930	\$355-\$655

The wide disparity between the initial basic salaries of these two grades in Government service (in all Departments and Ministries) was a cause of complaint for a long time. Many Pass Degree graduates preferred to take up employment in the commercial or industrial firms where there was generally much less difference between the two grades.

For the Pass Degree graduates, the 1959 S.E.S. Scheme was even worse than the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme.

1953 S.E.S. Scheme

	With Diploma in Education
Honours Degree Graduates	\$605-\$1,100
Pass Degree Graduates	\$455-\$920

The 1953 S.E.S. Scheme offered the initial basic salary of \$455 to Pass Degree graduates while the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme only offered \$385. The initial basic salary of \$385 compared to the \$610 for Honours Degree graduates is equivalent to a difference of 10 increments in the basic point of entry; this was unfair especially when Pass Degree graduates were doing similar duties and assuming similar responsibilities as the Honours Degree graduates in the school.

In the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme, Honours Degree graduates were offered a much improved maximum (from \$1,100 to \$1,260). Pass Degree teachers were offered \$930 in place of \$920 but in the actual implementation,

"the new basic point of entry, which was lower, was faithfully implemented while the new maximum written into the appointment papers is \$900 instead of \$930. This recent addition of \$900 as the trained Pass Degree teacher's maximum came as a great surprise to the Union. Nowhere in either the old scheme or in the 1958 Scheme can this new maximum be found".³⁰

The disparity was further enhanced when the rate of increments for Pass Degree graduates was compared with those of the Honours Degree graduates. As a result of these differences, Pass Degree graduates lost in seniority and in opportunity for promotion.

The scale for the Pass Degree graduates even compared unfavourably with the Certificated teachers' scale; both the Certificate course and the Pass Degree course were full-time courses.

1953 S.E.S. Scheme

Salary Scale

Pass Degree Teacher	\$455-\$920	6 years' full-time training
Certificated Teacher	\$365-\$780	2 years' full-time training

The Pass Degree graduate had to spend 3 times as many years of preparation to train as a teacher and during the four additional years required to train a Pass Degree teacher, the Certificated teacher would have served 4 years and would have received 4 increments of \$20 per year. If both the Certificated teacher and the Pass Degree teacher completed the School Certificate examination in the same year, the salary drawn by the Certificated teacher would eventually be \$445 basic when the Pass Degree teacher began service with \$455; the difference of \$10 was absurd, taking into account that the Pass Degree teacher had 2 additional qualifications, namely the Higher School Certificate

and the Pass Degree conferred on him by the University, plus loss of 6 years' earnings and expenditure on his studies.

With the implementation of the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme for Pass Degree graduates, their position was worse. If both finished school at the same time, the Certificated teacher, 4 years after his teacher-training, would draw a salary higher than that of the Pass Degree teacher, with his Diploma in Education as he would begin his teaching career at \$385 per month.

The period of time in training for non-graduate teachers was taken into account whereas that of the Pass Degree graduates was evidently not.

The graduate teachers were divided into different segments after the enforcement of the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme thus:

1. Honours Degree and Pass Degree graduates; their respective salary scales were wholly unrelated.
2. Graduates on the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme and graduates on the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme.
3. Graduates in receipt of specialist allowances and graduates not in receipt of specialist allowances.
4. Graduates in receipt of specialist allowances appropriate to them and graduates in receipt of specialist allowances not appropriate to them according to the terms and specifications governing the award of such allowances.
5. Honours Degree graduates in receipt of only untrained Pass Degree salary (fixed at \$355 instead of the appropriate scale for untrained Honours Degree graduates (\$465-\$780)).

Principals

The main contention of the principals was that since the Establishment Office had thought it fit to implement its tentative proposals as the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme, with the depressed time scales, it would be logical to expect that the scheme would be carried out fully with the institution of the promotion scales intact. This was never done. The Primary School principal, who obtained his allowance at a

fixed rate, found himself, more often than not, in an anomalous position³¹ thus:

Mr. 'A', a 1953 Normal trained teacher was promoted to the substantive post of Principal, Primary English School, in March 1959. He was on the scale of \$325/- x \$15/- \$490/- // \$530/- x \$20/- - \$690/-. He obtained a fixed post allowance of \$150/- if he were in charge of a school with more than 11 classes or \$120/- if his school had fewer than 11 classes.

In 1963 he was drawing a salary of \$460/- basic plus \$150/- Post Allowance (or \$120/- P.A.). The yearly increment was still \$15/-.

1. Any Certificated teacher who qualified before 1959 serving under 'A' would be drawing a bigger yearly increment than his Principal.
2. Mr. 'B', a 1952 Normal trained teacher was promoted to the same rank in 1963. His basic salary was \$475/- plus the same fixed allowance of \$150/- or \$120/-. Therefore his overall pay was higher than Mr. 'A' who had four years' seniority over him as a Principal.
3. Some Normal trained lady Principals appointed in 1962 found that Certificated teachers on their staff drew more pay than they themselves.

This was construed as a denial of the special status of principals and the moral obligation to pay them the rate for the job. Principalship, unlike teaching, carried the added administrative and supervisory responsibilities. "Besides maintaining good relations with the public and effective liaison with other Government Departments, they (the principals) are expected to develop imaginative approaches in staff relations and exercise care/accuracy in speedily discharging their duties..."³² Principals in primary and secondary schools since 1959 were paid an allowance which was pensionable in the case of English school principals and non-pensionable in the case of Chinese school principals; this practice, commented the S.T.U., was out of date and created glaring anomalies. The situation compared unfavourably with the parallel schemes of service of other Government Departments - the

Library Officers, Air Traffic Control Officers, Health Inspectors and Laboratory Assistants or Higher Customs Officers were all emplaced on a promotion scale.

Much as we dislike having to make comparisons we contend that the rank and status of a school Principal, the service he affords to society, and the requisite academic and professional qualifications he has to acquire before he can occupy the post, cannot be in any way inferior or lesser than that of many other categories of government officers.(33)

It was the contention of the S.T.U. that very few other government departments could be as competitive as that of the education service when it came to earning promotion. And the 'load' of responsibility and duties increased with the advent of full internal self-government in mid-1959. Before that time, Principals were mainly put in charge of one session but if they were put in charge of the afternoon session as well, they were paid an extra \$75/- per month; after that time, no extra allowance was paid to the principal who had to look after another session in the same school. A blow to their status was that not all primary school principals were Division I officers. A teacher was appointed to Division II and after several years' service, he rose to be head of a primary school with a large staff, a large enrolment and a host of added responsibilities. It was felt that the head of an establishment, like that of a primary school, should be a Division I officer.

The struggle for status and fair wages is still on; the principals, especially of primary schools, still feel themselves an exploited category in the teaching service.

The 1958 S.E.S. Scheme - always referred to as the Proposed 1958 S.E.S. Scheme by the S.T.U. because it was imposed on the teachers - scaled down what was then regarded in civil service circles as "inflated"

salaries received by teachers under the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme so that they would be in keeping with the general pattern of other salary structures in the civil service. Its "anomalies and discriminatory features" were the subject of numerous fierce resolutions, memoranda and central council meetings; legal opinions and interviews with the Minister and Ministry officials were sought; protest meetings and rallies were held and protest marches were planned; a strike fund was started (but fizzled out later); in fact, for the next 10 years, and even up to now, salary difficulties have been engaging the attention of teachers. The 1958 S.E.S. Scheme had another effect which set back the progress of the union: as never before it accentuated sectional differences among the different categories of teachers in the S.T.U. after 1959. In the same year the G.T.A. and other associations of teachers and head teachers in the English schools decided to take the necessary steps to dissolve their organisations in order to allow their members to join the S.T.U. The S.T.U. amended its constitution to allow for branches to be formed, one for each category of teachers. In 1959, the multiplicity of establishment problems and the problems of re-organisation of the S.T.U. were compounded with the problems that cropped up over the implementation of the policy of nation-building in schools. Altogether they made the 1960s a decade of great conflicts and confusion in the history of the S.T.U.

CONCLUSION

Professional leadership emerged in the first 4 years of the existence of the S.T.U. It was able to engage the sympathies and support of local educationists like D.D. Chelliah, Francis Thomas and Ho Seng Ong among others in order to provide leadership in the broad field of education. There were others, notably Paul Abisheganaden and Seow Cheng Fong who were prominent in the social and cultural life of the English educated in Singapore. Balhetchet, the first President of the S.T.U., was an Inspector of Schools in an education service that was determined to preserve all the important posts in the service for the Europeans in the Colonial Education Service. In Sarma, the S.T.U. had a forceful spokesman for the teaching profession as a whole. The leaders during this period were people who were confident of their professional ability and as trade unionists, they believed with almost religious fervour in a unified education service for all teachers in the English schools. They did not cringe before officialdom nor did they hesitate to point out the absurdities that existed in the education service and in educational policies. At the end of 1950, the S.T.U. had a membership of 851 teachers out of a possible total of 1,041 teachers in the English schools.¹

A group of young Normal trained teachers assumed the leadership

of the S.T.U. after a period of short-lived and unstable Management Committees by the time of the announcement of the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme. They became preoccupied with the plight of the Normal trained teachers and little else. They saw the "jiggery pokery" that took place in the formulation and the implementation of the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme as a result of the unrealistic stand the colonial establishment took against recognising the Normal Training Certificate as the basic minimum professional qualification and of the caste attitude of the G.T.A. They complained bitterly that the Normal trained teachers who had completed the Post Normal training were not given any "immediate benefit" because of the operation of Colonial Regulation No. 44² which did not permit any immediate benefit to an officer in service on obtaining a higher qualification. The S.T.U. contended that the Post Normal course, which existed from 1954 to 1957, was not a higher qualification as "it is merely a device to absorb the large majority of teachers excluded from the Scheme".³ The "discriminatory practices" in the education service, as spelled out by Sarma in September, 1946, still prevailed; there was still no parity of women teachers with men teachers and married women teachers had no established status; the aided school teachers did not enjoy the same conditions of service as their counterparts in the government schools. "Serfdom and privilege" existed side by side, groused the S.T.U. The "plums" of the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme were reserved for 776 teachers out of a total of 4,042 teachers in service.⁴ As late as 1958, Normal trained teachers were specifically debarred from the posts of principals, Primary Schools. Up to the end of 1960, there were only 16 Normal trained teachers who were able to break what the S.T.U. described as "the promotion barrier", a mere 0.45%.

In a memorandum to the Ministry, it stated:

·It is to say the least unreasonable to expect those teachers to work with enthusiasm in discharging their duty if the existing conditions remain unaltered. (5)

The militancy which the leaders showed in the Normal Training Issue disappeared when the government threatened government teachers with the disciplinary sections of the General Orders and the loss of their pensions. This was the occasion chosen by the government to introduce and later adopt what purported to be the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme. The weakness of the S.T.U. in the face of a real challenge should be seen against the general weakness of the trade unions of the other government employees as they were also affected by the salary revisions. There was however one grave implication for the teachers. The 1958 S.E.S. Scheme did not consider teachers in the English schools as a special service which required special conditions. It was issued by the Establishment Branch of the government without any negotiation. It abandoned the basic scale for which the early leaders of the S.T.U. had fought hard and was now tied to the key scales in the civil service. The C. in E. teachers who were eventually put on the Scheme became the most discontented teachers as they felt that they had been deliberately "cheated" and that feeling is still evident today, after 12 years and after another 2 salary revisions.⁸ Teaching became a downgraded service. Bureaucracy ceased to be an instrument of policy but an abuse of the power vested in the colonial bureaucrats.

There was in fact no proper recognition of the trade unionism of teachers by the government. There was no agreement on procedure for consultation and negotiation. The Normal Training Issue was a case in point. The Director of Education and Permanent Secretary passed the

buck to the Establishment Officer who then referred it to the Financial Secretary. Finally the S.T.U. was told that the Council of Ministers would meet to discuss the Normal Training Issue and when a decision was arrived at by the Council, it would be conveyed to the S.T.U. The S.T.U. was not informed of any decision made. It could be that the Ministry concentrated, during this period, on the main problem of education, that is, the containment of the Chinese middle school students to the exclusion of all the other issues of education. The fact remained that the S.T.U. was not accorded the right of collective bargaining. The Whitley Council machinery - i.e. the Civil Service Joint Council - that was introduced in 1954 did not interest the teachers as they always felt that the education service was a special service and required conditions, criteria and procedures different from the other services. The Joint Council was meant for all civil servants. Acceptance by government of the trade unionism of teachers would set limits to its freedom and an agreed procedure for consultation and negotiation would have to be set up. But were educational policy and its administration not matters for consultation with the teachers? Were teachers to be crushed by the full weight of the educational bureaucracy? It was after the imposition of the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme that the S.T.U. called for the setting up of an Education Service Commission to be separate from the P.S.C. The P.S.C. dealt with the huge body of civil servants of many different grades and functions and applied criteria that were not appropriate to the education service. The proposed Commission would be to see that the value of professional qualifications was fairly maintained and that a single system of professional training was instituted for turning out teachers with a basic minimum standard for the education service. This had been

the bugbear of the locally recruited teachers since the days of the monitorial system. It was the government of the day that selected, trained, examined and hallmarked the teachers. None of the mission authorities undertook the training of its own teachers. The government as the biggest employer of teachers could put the value of any professional certificate or diploma at any rate it thought fit, depending on such factors as race, sex, year of qualification, and the country where the certificate came from. It could weaken a certificate by admitting trainee teachers without the minimum qualifications. It could devalue a certificate. It could train teachers and award them certificates which it had no intention at all of recognising as the basic minimum professional qualification. The whole question of the evaluation and changing values of professional qualifications arose from the indifference of the teachers' associations and their parent body in the past and from the weakness of the teachers' unions in the post-war colonial period.

Advent of Self-Government

The agitation in connection with the Normal Training Issue was carried out during the period when the anti-colonial movement was gaining strength and support. The movement was led by the People's Action Party which was formed in 1954. It demanded independence from colonial rule, the repeal of the Emergency Regulations which restricted political activities and also the repeal of certain laws that did not allow the right of trade unions to participate in politics. It denounced the Rendel Constitution and took up the causes of the militant trade unions. There was no doubt that the frustrations with the education service made many of the Normal trained teachers co-operate

with the radicals and the working class movement. The legal adviser of the S.T.U. was the secretary-general of the People's Action Party.

Since 1955 the political conditions in Malaya had changed and by the 31st August, 1957, it became independent with a constitution that recognised Malay as the national and official language and English was to be the other official language for the period of "transition". The P.A.P. saw that the ultimate independence of Singapore was linked with a merger with Malaya and that the acceptance of Malay as the national language did not contradict the recommendations of the All-Party Committee Report. As an article in the Tasks Ahead stated:

The study of the Malay Language will not only act as a bridge that will span simultaneously our 4 streams of education but it will help us cross the Straits of Johore into the Federation. (7)

The S.T.U. leaders were enthusiastic about the prospect of full internal self-government, with a fully elected and multi-lingual Legislative Assembly and a greatly liberalised franchise, based on a specially created Singapore citizenship; defence and external affairs were to be retained by the British. The logic of the change in political status was that the people in Singapore would find greater incentive in working and building to their own plan and according to their own aims rather than according to the standards and restrictions of the colonial power. Local graduates were gradually taking over the posts that mattered in the Ministry of Education from the expatriates. More varied skills were called for, greater investment and new horizons were seen for education and the S.T.U. would find, it hoped, a sympathetic appreciation of its problems and aspirations. The education structure came under severe criticism. To the S.T.U., the demand for a multi-lingual legislature, the demand for parity of

treatment and esteem of the Chinese schools and the failure of the schools to fit students for occupations other than that of the lower orders of the clerical service were all traceable to the faults of education and the education structure. They created and maintained the economic distinction between the English educated and the Chinese educated, graduate and non-graduate teachers, the administrators and those administered. But while the S.T.U. leaders welcomed parity of treatment of the Chinese schools with the English schools, the G.T.A. spoke of the "drum beats of the army of invasion" from the Chinese school system posing a threat to English education.⁸ The movement towards parity of treatment and esteem of the different systems of education was beyond the understanding of some of its members. It displayed the intellectual immaturity in social and political thinking on the part of the leaders of the G.T.A. They were unable to respond to the challenge of education in a country that was to have full internal self-government. If education was to keep up with the pace and requirements of social development, attitudes and practices which inhibited progress in the colonial period had to be abandoned. More schools, greater economic growth, changes in social expectations, greater demand for tertiary education in the different languages, greater demand for graduates in commerce, industry and government departments, growth of the public services and the social services and the promotion and encouragement of the things that would bring about a better standard and quality of life - all these expectations would be felt by the educational institutions and there should be sufficient resources to meet the needs of economic and social growth of a modern country. There was also that need in Singapore to encourage and foster

a sense of unity within Singapore and this was not an easy problem. It would mean that the citizens of Singapore and those who intended to make Singapore their home should be prepared to break their ancestral ties with countries which had centuries of culture and cohesion and also whatever political claims there might be. A Malayan nationalism had to be fostered. This was no problem for the English school teachers on the whole and they were prepared to act together to create a consciousness of being citizens of Singapore.

There was a spate of articles in the Teachers' Forum in 1959 welcoming the changes that would take place in the political status of Singapore and in the field of education. Some of the articles⁹ were: New Horizons in Education, Teachers in a Changing Singapore, Changes in a Socialist Society, The Role of Teachers in a Democracy, The S.T.U. - A New Approach. The writers restated the social and political roles of education and the importance of the school as the forcing house of a common Malayan nationality, ideas which had been espoused in the early post-war period but which assumed greater relevance and urgency in 1959. They also restated the principles of unification to include the different systems of the education service and called for a unified education system (i.e. a comprehensive system of centralised control of the 4 school systems). They were generally in agreement with the ideas of the P.A.P. on education.

The advent of full internal self-government called for new thinking especially on the role of the S.T.U. as a professional organisation. In April, 1959, its President called for a greater all-round investment in education, particularly in the schools and in teacher-preparation. Politicians and administrators, he said, made plans but it was the

teachers that made plans succeed or fail. Their appraisal of any plan was therefore essential and teachers as professionals should have the right to bring to bear their professional expertise on the planners, administrators and the politicians.¹⁰ However the dissatisfaction of the Normal trained teachers with the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme had the effect of transforming the S.T.U. into an industrial workers' union but without the right of consultation and negotiation normally associated with a strong trade union. There was a complete absence of professional issues. No time was spent on mobilising the opinions of teachers on any of the professional questions. There was no professional expertise to speak of. It even left to the party in power to work out the educational implications of nation-building and define the social values to teach in school. It did not mobilise the full weight of the teachers to determine what kind of social values nation building in school should foster and what the educational function of teachers should be. The S.T.U. was whole-heartedly for nation-building. But should it give unlimited rights to the government of the day to determine the criteria of allegiance and loyalty to the country? Should the government of the day impose any political tests it wished upon teachers to ensure that they were fit to become teachers? The question of independence of teachers in carrying out their teaching duties, their rights and professional preparation were questions that the S.T.U. neglected. There was need for the S.T.U. to work out a proper balance of interests, not indulge in salary and establishment matters to the complete exclusion of professional matters that affected teachers as a whole. For the next 12 years, the S.T.U. was involved in issues that arose out of its dereliction of the professional role - i.e. the

educational function of teachers in nation-building was assigned by the government - and salary and establishment matters especially those related to the Normal trained teachers and the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme.

NOTES

CHAPTER 1

1. 'Malaya' in this study is intended to mean the Malay Peninsula (mainland) and the island of Singapore. Before the war, the Malay Peninsula consisted of 4 Malay States (Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang), 5 Unfederated Malay States (Kedah, Johore, Kelantan, Trengganu and Perlis) and the Straits Settlements of Malacca and Penang.
2. Wong Hoi Kee and Eo Tiang Hong, Education in Malaysia (Hong Kong: Heinemann, 1971, p. 52.
3. K.M. Waldhauser, 'Education from 1819 - 1867', 150 Years of Education in Singapore, ed. T.R. Doraisamy (Singapore: Teachers' Training College Publications Bureau, 1969), p. 23.
4. Rupert Emerson, Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, Revised Edition, 1964), pp. 304-6.
5. Tan Peng Boo, Education in Singapore (Singapore: Educational Publications Bureau, 1969), p. 1.
6. For a discussion on educational administration in Malaya, see Waldhauser, 'Education from 1867 to 1942', 150 Years of Education in Singapore, pp. 38-9.
7. Colony of Singapore, Interim Report of the Malayisation Commission 1956 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1956), para. 4(c), p. 100.
8. Annual Report of the Department of Education for 1946 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1947), p. 1.
9. Ibid.
10. See Gwee Yee Hean, 'Chinese Education in Singapore', 150 Years of Education in Singapore, pp. 90-1.
11. See Waldhauser, 'Education from 1819 to 1867', p. 13.
12. Ibid., pp. 25-6.
13. Ibid., p. 24.
14. Ibid., p. 23.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid., p. 26.

17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., pp. 26, 36.
19. Matthew Arnold, General Report for 1867, cited by Waldhauser, p. 27.
20. Waldhauser, p. 27.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. R.O. Winstedt, Education in Malaya, Series No. 15 (Singapore: Fraser and Neave Ltd, 1923), pp. 10-1.
27. Ibid.
28. Gwee, p. 88.
29. Lee Ah Chai, Policies and Politics in Chinese Schools in the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States, 1786 - 1941 (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Malaya, 1957), p. 118.
30. Waldhauser, pp. 30-3.
31. Ibid., p. 30.
32. Ibid., p. 32.
33. Ibid.
34. Straits Settlements, Education Code 1902, cited by Waldhauser, p. 42.
35. Annual Report on Education 1898, cited by D.D. Chelliah, A Short History of the Educational Policy of the Straits Settlements, 1800 - 1925 (Kuala Lumpur: Government Press, 1947), p. 127.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., p. 130.
39. Ibid.

40. Annual Report on Education 1918, cited by Chelliah, p. 131.
41. Chelliah, p. 132.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. For a discussion on the social and political problems of education in Singapore, see Gwee, 'Education and the Multi-Racial Society', Modern Singapore, ed. Ooi Jin Bee and Chiang Hai Ding (Singapore: University of Singapore, 1969), pp. 208-14.
46. Wang Gungwu, Malayan Nationalism (London: Royal Central Asian Society, 1962), p. 2.
47. Lee Han Yang, 'Inter-Racial Harmony and National Unity in Malaysia through Education', Teachers' Forum, April/May, 1964, p. 13.
48. Wang Gungwu, p. 1.
49. Ibid.
50. Alexander Carr-Saunders, Report of the Commission on University Education in Malaya (Kuala Lumpur: Government Press, 1948), p. 133.
51. Wong and Ee, p. 33.
52. Wang Gungwu, p. 2.
53. Goh Keng Swee, 'Rectification of the English Educated', Petir, January, 1960, p. 7.
54. J.J. Puthucheary, 'Are the English Educated a Reactionary Class?' Petir, December, 1959, p. 8.
55. Zahoor Ahmad, 'Malay Education in Singapore', 150 Years of Education in Singapore, p. 100.
56. Waldhauser, p. 6.
57. Joseph Dorai, 'Tamil Education in Singapore', 150 Years of Education in Singapore, p. 117.
58. T.H. Silcock, Dilemma in Malaya (London: Fabian Publications Ltd, 1949), p. 1.
59. Rupert Emerson, in a review of 2 books on Malaya, Pacific affairs, No. 19, December, 1946, p. 433.

60. Victor Purcell, 'The Proposed New Constitution', Pacific Affairs, No. 19, March, 1946, p. 30.
61. Yeo Kim Wah, Political Development in Singapore, 1945 - 1955 (Unpublished H.A. thesis, University of Singapore, 1967), p. 98.
62. Ibid., p. 99.
63. Chelliah, pp. 147-54.
64. V.E. Hendershot, An Historical Critique of the Education of British Malaya (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Los Angeles, 1941), p. 52.
65. Carr-Saunders Report, p. 10.
66. Ibid.
67. F. Mason, The Schools of Malaya (Singapore: Donald Moore, 1959), p. 25.
68. Gwee, 'Chinese Education in Singapore', pp. 90-1.
69. (Social Democrat), 'Nanyang and the Chinese Language in Singapore', Singapore Herald, 8.5.71.
70. For a discussion on the Report of the All-Party Committee of the Singapore Legislative Assembly on Chinese Education 1956 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1956), see Gwee pp. 93-4.
71. Cheong Hock Hai, 'The Graduate Guild', The Grad, January, 1949, p. 3.
72. Tan Teik Kooi, 'What Price Education?', Malayan Educator, August, 1949, p. 8.
73. Ibid., pp. 8-9.
74. Wyn Williams, 'The Proper Concerns of Education', Education for Democracy, ed. David Rubinstein and Colin Stoneman (Middlesex: Penguin, 1970), p. 161.
75. K.M. Panikkar, The Afro-Asian States and their Problems (London: Allen and Unwin, 1959), p. 60.
76. Editorial, Malayan Educator, September, 1948, p.1.
77. Ibid.
78. Ibid., p. 2.
79. Ibid.

80. Final Report of the Malayanisation Commission 1957, p. 127.
McNeice: It has never been suggested that the expatriate civil service was not represented in the Legislative Council. That is a very different statement from Mr. Byrne's previous statement which was that the Government was the expatriate civil service.
81. C. Gamba, The Origins of Trade Unionism in Malaya (Singapore: Donald Moore, 1962), pp. 96-7.
82. Final Report of the Malayanisation Commission 1957, p. 261.

NOTES

CHAPTER 2

1. S.T.U. Petition on the Acceptance of Normal Training as the Basic Qualification for Direct Entry to the 1953 Singapore Education Service, the Abolition of the Post Normal Training and the Institution of a Single Type of Basic Training for Teachers, 19.2.55, p. 1.
2. Chelliah, p. 133.
3. The Malayan Union comprised the 9 Malay States (Federated and Unfederated) and the 2 Settlements of Malacca and Penang. Singapore was a separate colony. The prospect of future union of the Malayan Union and Singapore was not ruled out. The Governor-General in Southeast Asia was to co-ordinate and oversee the administration of these 2 colonies as well as Sarawak, British North Borneo (Sabah) and Brunei. In the Malayan Union, there was centralised Federal control of education. On 1.2.48, the Malayan Union became the Federation of Malaya. The State or Settlement governments assumed executive authority over "primary, secondary and trade school education, excluding measures designed to ensure a common policy and a common system of administration ...". (Report of the Department of Education, Federation of Malaya, 1949, p. 41).
4. Letter from 7 Raffles College graduates to the Senior Inspector of Schools, Penang on 9.12.46.
5. Straits Settlements, Government Gazette Notification No. 175A, 7.9.28.
6. Gazette Notification No. 1583, 19.8.32.
7. J. Gurusamy, 'A Brief History of the Fight for Equal Pay', Souvenir Publication, 1964, p. 57.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. S.T.U. Memorandum on the Unification of the Education Service and the Revision of Salaries, submitted to the Salaries Commission, headed by Sir Harry Trusted, on 21.4.47, p. 5.
11. Ibid.
12. P.T.U. Memorandum to the S.T.U., 17.11.47.

13. See Asher Tropp, The School Teachers (London: Heinemann, 1957), p. 250.
14. Colonial Office, Organisation of the Colonial Service, Colonial No. 197 (London: H.M.S.O., 1946), p. 8.
15. S.T.U. Memorandum on Unification, pp. 5-6.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
18. Gamba, The Origins of Trade Unionism in Malaya, p. 88.
19. S.T.U. Memorandum on Unification, p. 10.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
22. Gamba, p. 88.
23. Based on E.A. Joy, Report by the Committee appointed to consider the Retirement Benefits of Teachers of Grant-in-aid English Schools (Kuala Lumpur: Department of Education, 1951), mimeographed.
24. S.T.U. Memorandum on Unification, p. 15.
25. *Ibid.*
26. Gurusamy, p. 26. In general, a woman teacher's salary was four-fifths of that for men of similar qualifications, according to the Burnham Committee. See Asher Tropp, p. 249.
27. Gurusamy, p. 61.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-8.
31. Report of the Department of Education 1946 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1947), p. 5.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Ibid.*, p.20.
35. *Ibid.* Out of 234 candidates, 188 (80%) passed, with a large number of Grade 1 Certificates awarded.

36. Report of the Department of Education 1946, p. 6.
37. Ibid., p. 25.
38. Report of the Department of Education 1948, pp. 55-6.
39. See Gamba, The Origins of Trade Unionism in Malaya, p. 53.
40. Ibid.
41. See Gamba, 'Parties and Politics in Malaya', Foreign Affairs Reports, Vol. 3, 1954, pp. 54-78.
42. Gamba, 'Staff Relations in the Government Services of Malaya', Malayan Economic Review, Vol. II, No. 2, 1957, p. 15.

NOTES

CHAPTER 3

1. Gurusamy, p. 21.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p. 22.
6. Ibid.
7. T.U.M. minutes of Extraordinary General Meeting, held on 26. 9.47.
8. T.U.M. letter to Director of Education, Malayan Union, 29.9.47.
9. M.T.U. minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, held on 13/14.12.47.
10. S.T.U. minutes of the convening meeting, held on 28.9.46.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. S.T.U. minutes of Inaugural Meeting, held on 19.10.46.
18. The 9 co-opted members were H.M. Balhetchet, R.K. Sarma, Dudley Es, Lim Choo Sye, Goh Cheong Yeow, R. Eber, Voo Fook Koon, Mrs. Quah Quee Tin and Mrs. Kiang Ai Kin.
19. Section 25 (ii) of the Enactment 1940 reads as follows:
No Government officer or servant shall join or be a member of any trade union or shall be accepted as a member of any trade union: Provided that the High Commissioner may by notification in the Gazette exempt from the provisions of this sub-section

either wholly or subject to such conditions as are in such notifications specified any Government officers or servants or any categories, classes or descriptions of Government officers or servants.

20. Straits Settlements, Gazette Notification Supplement No. 154, cited by Sarma in his report.
21. S.T.U. minutes of Inaugural Meeting.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. article 2: Objects of the G.T.A. constitution reads thus:
 - a. The objects of this Association shall be to secure the complete organisation and unity of its members.
 - b. To promote friendship, understanding and co-operation among the various races residing in this colony.
 - c. To obtain and maintain for its members just and proper rates of salaries and reasonable hours and conditions of work and to provide advice and assistance in accordance with the provisions contained in these articles.
 - d. To regulate the relations between employer and employee, between one member and another and between members and other workers and to endeavour to adjust any differences between them by amicable and conciliatory means.
 - e. To provide, if decided upon by a General Meeting of members, such benefits as victimisation pay and professional dispute pay.
 - f. To establish, if decided upon by members, a benevolent section to provide any of the following benefits: sickness, accident, disablement or funeral, and to draw up rules governing the management of such benefits subject to the prior approval of the Registrar of Trade Unions.
 - g. To further (financially or otherwise) the work or purpose of any association or federal body having for its objects the promotion of the interests of graduates, teachers, trade unions and trade unionists subject to statutory limitations on the use of trade union funds.
 - h. To promote the material, social, educational and cultural welfare of its members in any lawful manner which the Annual or Extraordinary General Meetings or the Executive Committee may from time to time deem expedient.

29. S.T.U. minutes of Inaugural Meeting.
30. Ibid.
31. The other office-bearers were as follows:
- | | | |
|-------------------|-----|----------------------|
| General Secretary | ... | P.V. Sarna |
| Editor | ... | N. Scharenguivel |
| Committee Members | ... | T.E.K. Retnam |
| | | F.C. James |
| | | Seow Cheng Fong |
| | | Tay Keng Hock |
| | | Kiang Ai Kin (Mrs.) |
| | | Quah Quee Tin (Mrs.) |
32. S.T.U. minutes of Inaugural Meeting.
33. Ibid.
34. See Chapter 4, p. 104.
35. S.T.U. Constitution, Rules 2 (a) and 3 (a):
- 2(a). To secure the complete organisation of all persons employed in the teaching profession by or under Government in English Schools and colleges in Singapore.
- 3(a). Ordinary membership shall be open to all teachers employed in the Government Schools and colleges and all lay teachers employed in the Government grant-in-aid schools, regardless of race, creed, belief or sex.
36. S.T.U. minutes of Extraordinary General Meeting, held on 4.2.47.
37. Ibid.

NOTES

CHAPTER 4

1. Ganba, The Origins of Trade Unionism in Malaya, p. 76.
2. Ibid., p. 73.
3. S.T.U. minutes of Annual General Meeting, held on 17.4.47. Balhetchet gave a detailed report on the history of negotiations regarding back pay for government servants.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ganba, pp. 71-3.
7. Editorial, Straits Times, 11.6.46.
8. Ganba, p. 77.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., pp. 78-9.
11. Colonial Secretary to J.C.S.A., Singapore, 14.2.47.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Deputy Chief Secretary to John Eber, 17.9.47.
15. Minutes of meeting of Working Committee of the S.G.S.B.P.C., 23.9.47.
16. Speech (mimeographed) in S.T.U. Back Pay File, 21.2.47.
17. Ganba, p. 88.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., p. 86.
20. John Eber to S.G.S.B.P.C., 14.11.47.
21. S.T.U. report of interview with Sir Harry Trusted, 8.7.47. The S.T.U. representatives were T.E.K. Retnan, P.V. Sarma, Seow Cheng Fong and Paul Abisheganaden.

22. Report of the Public Services Salaries Commission of Malaya 1947 (Trusted Report) (Kuala Lumpur: Government Press, 1947), p. 1.
23. S.T.U. Memorandum on Unification, pp. 6-7.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
26. An extract from Malayan Establishment, Conditions of Service, cited in S.T.U. Memorandum on Unification, p. 13.
27. S.T.U. Memorandum on Unification, p. 13.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-5.
30. M.T.U. Petition dealing with Conditions of Service of Government and Aided School Teachers, 7.10.50, p. 1.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
32. M.T.U. First Annual Report, 31.7.48, p. 2.
33. P.V. Sarma, 'The University and the Teaching Profession', Report of a Symposium on the Carr-Saunders Report on University Education in Malaya, ed. Lin Tay Boh (Singapore: International Student Service, 1948), p. 5.
34. T.H. Silcock, Towards a Malayan Nation (Singapore: Donald Moore, 1961), p. 22.
35. Sarma, p. 5.
36. Carr-Saunders Report, p. 24.
37. Sarma, p. 6.
38. Carr-Saunders Report, p. 62.
39. Sarma, p. 7.
40. S.T.U. Facts and Figures, 1946 -7, p. 3.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 1
44. Conference Draft Memorandum on the Establishment of a Unified Education Service in the Federation of Malaya similar to that recommended by the Public Services Commission to the Government of Singapore for the Colony of Singapore, 22.6.51, p. 3.

45. The telegrams were sent between 16.4.47 and 22.4.47.
46. Scharenguivel to Seow Cheng Fong, 16.8.47.
47. S.T.U. Report on the Malayan Teachers' Union, submitted to the S.T.U. Third Annual General Meeting, held on 1.4.50.
48. M.T.U. minutes of Inaugural Meeting, held on 12.9.47.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.

NOTES

CHAPTER 5

1. Colony of Singapore, General Orders.
2. Ibid., G.O. 147.
3. S. Haridas, Government Unions in Singapore: an analysis (Unpublished academic exercise, University of Singapore, 1963), pp. 5-6.
4. Thio Chan Bee to Sarma, 7.10.47.
5. U.S.T. to S.T.U., 22.10.47.
6. M.T.U. minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, held on 8/9.12.47.
7. Ibid.
8. P.T.U. to S.T.U., 3.3.48.
9. U.S.T. to S.T.U., 12.3.48.
10. S.T.U. to Director of Education, Federation of Malaya, 21.2.48.
11. Director of Education, Federation of Malaya to S.T.U., 2.3.48.
12. S.T.U. to Director of Education, Federation of Malaya, 1.4.48.
13. M.T.U. minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, held on 26.5.48.
14. Circular of Chief Secretary to Heads of Departments and Resident Commissioners, cited at M.T.U. Executive Committee Meeting, held on 26.5.48.
15. Ibid.
16. For a history of Whitleysm in the post-war colonial period in Malaya, see Gamba, 'Staff Relations in the Government Services'.
17. Ibid.
18. M.T.U. minutes of Sub-committee (Whitley Council) Meeting, held on 21.2.48.

19. Chief Secretary to all the teachers' unions, 30.10.48.
20. M.T.U. minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, held on 15/16.2.48. Jack Brazier, the T.U.A.M., was invited to the meeting to help in discussing the points to be made in reply to the letter from the Chief Secretary.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Minutes of informal meeting of delegates from N.S.T.U., U.S.T. and S.T.U., held on 26.8.47.
24. S.T.U. to Director of Education, Federation of Malaya, 14.6.48.
25. The campaign was planned thus:
 1. The M.T.U. press statement was to appear in all English language newspapers on 21.6.48. A copy was to be forwarded to each of the Legislative Councillors in the Federation of Malaya and in the Colony of Singapore and also to each of the 2 Governors and the 2 Directors of Education.
 2. Each member union of the M.T.U. was to lobby for support of the Legislative Councillors in its State or Settlement.
 3. Each of the unions was to write special articles in the correspondence columns of the local newspapers as follows:
 - a. support recommendations although the recommendations were far short of what the teachers asked for (T.U.M.).
 - b. new discriminations would result if the Scheme for Education Officers was one that was different from that suggested by the M.T.U. (P.U.T.).
 - c. call for re-classification in the Scheme for Education Officers, for creation of new posts to allow for more locally recruited teachers in the Education Officers' Scheme (S.T.U.).
 - d. press for the establishment of the Public Services Commission (J.T.U.).
 - e. point out that in the salaries for women teachers, the Burman scales were not properly applied (T.U.P.).
 - f. point out the injustice of the length of the time scales (P.T.U.).
 - g. Class IV Normal trainees had a full teaching load and were different from probationers and therefore annual increments were called for (U.S.T.).

Letters on a, e and f were to appear between 20.6.48 and 26.6.48 in all the newspapers and the others, b, c, d and g, were to appear between 25.6.48 and 1.7.48.

26. M.T.U. minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, held on 19.6.48.
27. Ibid.
28. S.T.U. to Director of Education, Malayan Union and to Director of Education, Singapore, 12.11.47.
29. Director of Education, Malayan Union to S.T.U., 25.11.47.
30. U.S.T. Memorandum on Emergency Training Colleges, 6.5.48.
31. J.T.U. to S.T.U., 14.5.48.
32. T.U.M. to S.T.U., 11.5.48.
33. S.T.U. to U.S.T., 1.6.48.
34. Carr-Saunders Report, pp. 63-4.
35. S.T.U. minutes of Management Committee Meeting, held on 14.1.50.
36. V.K. Vanniasingham, Report on a Single System of Part-Time Teacher Training applicable to all Language Media (Singapore: Ministry of Education, November, 1959), mimeographed, p. 6.
37. M.T.U. press release, 9.12.47.
38. Silcock, Dilemma in Malaya, p. 23.
39. M.T.U. minutes of Inaugural Meeting.
40. Ibid.
41. Conference minutes, 20.8.50.
42. Conference minutes, 14.7.49.
43. Speech of G.V. Allen, reported in full in Malayan Educator, No. 7, August, 1949, p. 4.
44. T.U.P. Fourth Annual Report, 1951 - 1952.
45. U.S.T. to Wong Quek Boon (K.T.U.), 6.10.47.
46. S.T.U. minutes of Management Committee Meeting, held on 24.3.50. The committee member concerned was Paul Abisheganaden.
47. T.U.P. Fourth Annual Report, 1951 - 1952.
48. S.T.U. Second Annual Report, 1947 - 1948
49. S.T.U. First Annual Report, 1946 - 1947.

50. S.T.U. Second Annual Report, 1947 - 1948.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. By December, 1950, the trade unions that formed the Working Committee were as follows:
1. Municipal Services Union.
 2. Mental Hospital Uniformed Staff Union.
 3. Naval Base Workers' Union.
 4. Singapore Harbour Board Staff Association.
 5. Singapore Admiralty Local Staff Union.
 6. Government Printing Office Employees' Union.
 7. Government Municipal Water Department Labour Union.
 8. Singapore Municipal Town Cleansing Labour Union.
 9. Singapore Municipal Transport Workers' Union.
 10. Singapore Municipal Electrical Workers' Union.
 11. Singapore Municipal Sewerage Labour Union.
 12. Singapore Municipal Health Department Workers' Union.
 13. Government and Municipal Labour Union.
 14. The Naval Base Labour Union.
 15. Government Health Technical Staff Union.
 16. Singapore Harbour Board Employees' Union.
 17. Indian Drivers' Union.
 18. Singapore Malay Teachers' Union.
 19. Army Civil Service Union.
 20. Air Ministry Local Staff Union.
 21. Singapore Teachers' Union.
 22. Jantas Empire Airways Local Employees' Union.
 23. Singapore Public Works Labour Union.
 24. Singapore Municipal Night Soil Union.
 25. Singapore Wharf and Ship Labour Union.
54. Memorandum of the Trade Unions of Singapore on the High Cost of Living, December, 1950, p. 4.
55. The Committee comprised the following:
- | | | |
|-----------|-----|---|
| Chairman | ... | P.V. Sarma (S.T.U.) |
| Secretary | ... | Devan Mair (S.T.U.) |
| Members | ... | D.E. Siddons (Municipal Services Union) |
| | | P. Williams (Army Civil Service Union) |
| | | R.K. Palaiyan (Government and Municipal Labour Union) |
| | | M.K. Krishnan (Federation of Municipal Labour Union) |
| | | Koh Kim Sang (Naval Base Labour Union). |
56. Memorandum of the Trade Unions, p. 3.
57. The Council of Joint Action made representations on behalf of the Singapore Federation of Unions of Government Employees (comprising 10 unions), the Singapore Teachers' Union, the Graduate Teachers' Association, Public Works Labour Union,

Government Seamen's Union, Government Junior Staff Association, Government Printing Employees' Union and the Singapore Senior Officers' Association.

58. E.A. Ritson, Report of the Commission on Allowances 1953 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1953), p. 1.
In para. 26 (a), he said:

The Government should first determine the size of the temporary allowance. I have already suggested that the percentage addition to pay might be of the order of 25 per cent - 35 per cent for the lower income groups. Once that amount has been determined, the Government should ask the Establishment Officer to prepare a scheme of consolidation which would (i) convert the existing salary scales into new and tidy scales; (ii) embody a simple scheme of temporary allowances based on the fact that the allowance for the lower income groups will be of the order determined by the Government; (iii) leave the individual's total pay as little changed as possible.

Based on the views of the organised Government employees, the Establishment Officer should then work out new scales for the whole service. The views of the unions and associations, stressed Ritson, should be sought again before seeking Government's approval for the amended scales. It was his view that Government would find it necessary to fix different ceilings for allowances to be applied to single, married and married officers with children. He however felt that it was time to solve the problem of the gap between the salary of the expatriate officers and that of the locally recruited officers.

NOTES

CHAPTER 6

1. Editorial, Malayan Educator, August, 1949.
2. P.T.U. to S.T.U., 28.11.47.
3. Cited by P.T.U. in letter to S.T.U., 28.11.47.
4. M.T.U. minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, held on 8/9.12.47.
5. Ibid.
6. R.T.U., Singapore to S.T.U., 17.12.47.
7. Deputy Chief Secretary to S.T.U., 29.9.48.
8. S.T.U. to Deputy Chief Secretary, n.d., in Appendix 'C' of S.T.U. Second **Annual Report**, 8.4.49, p. 30.
9. Straits Times, 26.2.49.
10. M.T.U. minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, held on 19.2.48.
11. Gamba, 'Staff Relations in the Government Services of Malaya', pp. 19-20.
12. **R.T.U., Federation** of Malaya to John Eber, 18.3.49.
13. John Eber to R.T.U., Federation of Malaya, 25.3.49.
14. Ibid.
15. M.T.U. minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, held on 22.4.49.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. R.T.U., Federation of Malaya to S.T.U., 8.7.49.
19. R.T.U., Federation of Malaya to U.S.T., 27.7.49.
20. Editorial, Malayan Educator, August, 1949.
21. Conférence minutes, 25.8.49.
22. Devan Nair to S.T.U. members, 22.10.49.

23. Conference minutes, 22.10.49.
24. R.T.U., Federation of Malaya to Kanthaswamy, 30.10.49.
25. Kanthaswamy to Colonial Secretary, 5.12.49.
26. Chief Secretary to Kanthaswamy, 12.12.49.
27. Kanthaswamy to the teachers' unions, 21.1.50.
28. T.U.A.M. to T.U.P., 30.1.50.
29. Kanthaswamy to the teachers' unions, 6.2.50.
30. Devan Nair to Kanthaswamy, 11.3.50.
31. T.U.M. to Kanthaswamy, 3.4.50.
32. Kanthaswamy to the teachers' unions, 8.4.50.
33. Chief Secretary to Kanthaswamy, 28.2.50.
34. Minutes of Inaugural Meeting of P.M.T.U., held on 28.6.50.
35. Colonial Secretary to Thaver, 5.10.50.
36. Thaver to the teachers' unions, 5.11.50. R.T.U.'s letter of 24.11.50 was quoted.
37. Open letter by P.T.U., U.S.T., T.U.P., N.S.T.U. and J.T.U., 24.8.51.

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CHAPTER 7

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1. Report of the Department of Education 1947
(Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1948), p. 21.
 2. Trusted Report 1947, pp. 2-13.
 3. The principles laid down in Colonial 197, p. 8, were as follows:

Where the salaries so fixed (i.e. the salaries of the locally recruited staff) are insufficient to attract and retain officers from overseas, expatriation pay should be provided for such officers. In determining the rates of such expatriation pay, it will be relevant to consider such factors as the additional expenses to which an officer may be put by reason of the fact that he is serving away from home, especially when his service is in a non-temperate climate, the remuneration and amenities available in the officer's home country; and the general standard and conditions in the Colonial Service.
 4. S.T.U. Memorandum on the Trusted Commission Report, March, 1948, section 1, para. 5, p. 1.
 5. Ibid., section 1, para. 5, p. 2.
 6. Ibid., section 2, para. 7, p. 3.
 7. A comparative list of salary scales for teachers and other professional groups, compiled by the S.T.U. for use in the S.T.U. Memorandum on the Trusted Commission Report, p. 3.
(The scales for the Raffles College graduates assumed that the local graduate teachers had a post-graduate qualification in education).
 8. Ibid., section 2, para. 7 (b)(ii), p. 4.
 9. M.T.U. press statement, 11.12.47.
 10. Copy of letter in S.T.U./P.T.U. File.
 11. Copy of letter in S.T.U./P.T.U. File.
 12. The Chief Secretary said in Advisory Council that it was the view of the M.T.U. that the Honours degree was a superfluity in the education service. S.T.U./Legislative Council File.
 13. M.T.U. press statement, 5.1.48.

14. J.V. Cowgill, Report on the Revision of Salaries in the Public Service of the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore (Kuala Lumpur: Government Press, 1949), para. 3, p. 1.
15. Cowgill Salaries Report 1949, p. 3.
16. Ibid., para. 4, p. 2.
17. Speech (mimeographed) in S.T.U./Legislative Council File.
18. J.V. Cowgill, Interim Report of the Special Committee on Salaries 1948 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1948), p. 5.
19. Ibid., para. 12, p. 5.
20. Ibid., para. 14, p. 5.
21. Ibid., para. 13, p. 5.
22. Trusted Report 1947, para. 165, p. 19.
23. Cowgill, Interim Report 1948, para. 13, p. 5.
24. Cowgill Salaries Report 1949, para. 4(a), p. 4.
25. Ibid., para. 4(b), p. 4.
26. See S.T.U. Memorandum on Teachers' Salaries for the Consideration of the Benham Committee, 12.9.49, p. 4.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. J.T.U. notes on meeting between J.T.U. and Director of Education, held on 15.9.48.
30. M.T.U. minutes of meeting between M.T.U. representatives and the Official Side, represented by H.R. Cheeseman and J.V. Cowgill, held on 16.10.48.
31. S.T.U. Memorandum to the Benham Committee, p. 3.
32. Ibid., p. 2.
33. Ibid., p. 4.
34. Ibid., pp. 4-5.
35. F.C. Benham, Report on the Revision of Salaries in the Public Services of the Colony of Singapore by Special Committee on Salaries (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1950), p. vi.

36. P.T.U. Draft Memorandum on the Benham Report, November, 1950, p. 1.
37. Ibid., p. 1.
38. K.T.U. press statement, 6.10.50.
39. The teachers' unions decided to discuss the Mass Petition, prepared by U.S.T., on Conditions of Service of Aided School Teachers and to adopt the Petition, with amendments if necessary. Then it was to be signed by all the members of the unions and sent to the 2 governments concerned. The decision was the result of a resolution passed at the Conference of Delegates of Teachers' Unions on 21.8.50.
40. Conference minutes, 21.8.50.
41. Ibid.
42. Devan Nair to Kanthaswamy, 12.9.50.
43. Thaver to the teachers' unions, 5.10.50.
44. U.S.T. to Chief Secretary, 9.10.50.
45. P.T.U. to Chief Secretary, 9.10.50.
46. Kanthaswamy to Chief Secretary, 14.11.50.
47. Ibid.
48. Conference minutes, 13.12.50.

NOTES

CHAPTER 8

1. Recruitment White Paper No. 69 in Proceedings of the First Legislative Council, Colony of Singapore, 2nd Session 1949 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1950), p. c.882.
2. S.T.U. Memorandum rejecting the Benhan Committee's Recommendations and Chapter 7, Education Service, in the Recruitment White Paper No. 69 and pressing for the Immediate Acceptance of the Principle of a Unified Education Service, February, 1950, p. 2.
3. Trusted Report 1947, para. 165, p. 19.
4. S.T.U. Memorandum, p. 2.
5. S.T.U. to Governor of Singapore, 30.5.50.
S.T.U. expressed its gratitude to (his) Excellency and the other members of the Legislative Council for withdrawing the section on Education Service (Chapter 7) from White Paper No. 69.
6. S.T.U. Memorandum, p. 3.
7. S.T.U. minutes of Extraordinary General Meeting, held on 6.5.50.
8. Ibid.
9. Speech (mimeographed) in S.T.U./Legislative Council File.
10. S.T.U. minutes of Emergency Committee Meeting, held on 10.5.50.
11. Ibid.
12. S.T.U. Memorandum on the Unification of the Education Service Part II, 31.8.50, p. 2.
13. Ibid., pp. 2-3.
14. Benhan Committee Report 1950, para. 13, p. v.
15. Letter to Pan-Malayan Council of the Stamford Club, 20.1.50.
16. S.T.U. Memorandum Part II, pp. 4-5.
17. Kwan Sai Kheong, 'The Singapore Graduate Association', The Grad, October, 1951, p. 13.

18. Government notes of discussion between S.T.U. and the representatives of Government, held on 31.5.50, p. 1. The S.T.U. was represented by P.V. Sarna, N. Scharenguivel and Devan Nair.
19. S.T.U. to Chairman, Select Committee on Schemes of Service, Singapore, 26.6.50.
20. Government notes, p. 2.
21. Government notes of discussion between S.T.U. and the representatives of Government, held on 7.6.50.
22. S.T.U. Memorandum Part II, pp. 1-2.
23. Lian Loy Shin to P.U.T., 1.11.50.
24. U.S.T. to the teachers' unions, 2.4.50.
25. S.T.U. resolution passed at Extraordinary General Meeting, held on 29.12.50.
26. The Minority Report of the Select Committee was against parity for men and women teachers.
27. S.T.U. Memorandum rejecting Report No. 103 of 1950 of the Select Committee, 29.12.50, p. 6.
28. Section 4 of the General Provisions in Report of a Select Committee of the Legislative Council on Schemes of Service, Paper No. 103 1950 reads thus:
 Candidates for appointment under this scheme must be qualified teachers who either
 - (i) hold a university degree, or equivalent qualification, acceptable to the Public Services Commission and have undergone professional training acceptable to the Public Services Commission; or
 - (ii) have successfully completed a full-time course of study covering a period of at least 2 years at the Singapore Teachers' College; or
 - (iii) hold the certificate of any other Teachers' Training College, acceptable to the Public Services Commission.
 (p. c.684 in Proceedings of the First Legislative Council, Colony of Singapore, 3rd Session 1950 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1952))
29. S.T.U. Memorandum rejecting Report 103 of 1950, p. 5.
30. C.C. Tan to S.T.U., n.d., in S.T.U./Legislative Council File.
31. See Chapter 5, pp. 133-4.

32. S.T.U. minutes of Emergency General Meeting, held on 28.7.51.
33. From the point of view of the S.T.U., the fight for recognition of the Normal Training Certificate started with the acceptance by the Legislative Council of the Recruitment White Paper No. 69 of 1949.
34. Questions and Answers (mimeographed) in S.T.U./Legislative Council File.
35. S.T.U. minutes of Management Committee Meeting, held on 19.12.52.
36. Singapore Standard, 19.12.52.
37. S.T.U. press statement, 20.12.52.
38. Singapore Standard, 9.12.52.
39. S.T.U. press statement, 14.12.52.
40. The basic scale of the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme, with effect from 1.1.52, was as follows:
 Men: \$270x18A-360/Bar/384x24A-648/Bar/678x30A-738;
 774x36A-918 p.n.
 Women: \$246x12A-342/Bar/360x18A-540/Bar/534x30A-744 p.n.
 The initial of the basic scale was for the Certificated teacher. The initial of the pass degree teacher was 4 increments added to the initial of the whole scale, i.e. men: \$342; the initial of the Honours degree holder was 5 increments added to the initial of the pass degree teacher, i.e. men: \$456. The maximum for the Certificated teacher was \$624; the maximum for the pass degree teacher was 4 increments added to the maximum for the Certificated teacher, i.e. \$738; the maximum for the Honours degree holder was the maximum of the whole time scale, i.e. 5 increments added to the maximum for the pass degree teacher, i.e. men: \$918
 Normal trained teachers who on 1.1.50 crossed the first bar in the Cowgill scale or passed the age of 35 would be included in the 1953 S.E.S. Scheme proper. The majority would be on the Cowgill scales thus:
 Men: \$240x12A-372/Bar/390x18A-534/Bar/558x24A-654 p.n.
 Women: \$216x9.60-331.20/Bar/348x12A-432/Bar/450x18-522 p.n.
- The scales given here were before "ritsonisation".
41. The English Service (English Schools), Schedule A, para. 3 listed the posts to which appointment allowances were attached and the rates at which these allowances were payable as follows:
1. Headmaster or Headmistress of a Secondary School
 - a. which admitted 5 streams or more ... \$420 p.n.
 - b. which admitted fewer than 5 streams ... \$360 p.n.
 2. Inspector of Schools
 - Specialist Organiser in Music, Art or Physical Training ... \$300 p.n.

3. Headmaster or Headmistress of a Full School
 - a. which admitted 2 streams \$240 p.n.
and thereafter allowances would
increase by a additional sum of
\$60 p.n. for each additional
stream up to a maximum allowance
of \$420 p.n. for 5 streams or more
 - b. which admitted 1 stream \$180 p.n.
4. Specialist Teacher in Full or Secondary School
 - a. Grade I (Teacher in charge) \$240 p.n.
 - b. Grade II (Standard IX and
Post-School Certificate) \$180 p.n.
 - c. Grade III (Standard VIII) \$120 p.n.

An underqualified teacher called upon
to do the work of a specialist teacher,
pending the appointment of a **properly**
qualified teacher, would be eligible to
receive a non-pensionable Duty Allowance
of an amount equal to half the rate of
appointment allowance attached to the
post.
5. Assistant Inspector of Vernacular Schools,
Lecturer in the Teachers' Training College ... \$180 p.n.
6. Headmaster or Headmistress of a Primary School
 - a. which contained 11 classes or more ... \$150 p.n.
 - b. which contained less than 11 classes ... \$120 p.n.

NOTES

CHAPTER 9

1. Schemes of Service, Higher Services, 1953 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1953), pp. 22-8. Section 7 (iv) stated that teachers holding the Normal Training Certificate and on the Benhan or Cowgill scales "will not be eligible for appointment allowances under Schedule A". There were amendments and additions to the list of appointments under Schedule A by Government Notifications in 1955 and 1956.
2. S.T.U. Petition on the Acceptance of Normal Training as the Basic Qualification for Direct Entry to the Singapore Education Service, the Abolition of the Post Normal Training Course and the Institution of a Single Type of Basic Training for Teachers in English Schools, 19.2.55, p. 2.
3. Report of a Select Committee of the Legislative Council on Schemes of Service Paper No. 103 1950 in Proceedings of the First Legislative Council, Colony of Singapore, 3rd Session (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1952), p. c.675.
4. See Interim Report of the Malayisation Commission 1956, p. 92. By August, 1955, there were 95 Certificated teachers in the English schools. The Teachers' Training College started in 1950.
5. Report of the All-Party Committee on Chinese Education 1956, para. 26, p. 8.
6. Director of Education to S.T.U., 28.3.55.
7. S.T.U. minutes of Management Committee Meeting, held on 25.9.54.
8. S.T.U. Petition, p. 3.
9. G.T.A. to Director of Education, 25.5.55.
10. Director of Education to G.T.A., 3.6.55.
11. S.T.U. minutes of Emergency Committee Meeting, held on 12.7.55.
12. Ibid. Its president was Wong Quek Boon, who had been responsible for the formation of the K.T.U., of which he was the first president in 1947.
13. Ibid.

14. Abiavagar to K.M. Byrne, 12.7.55.
15. Interim Report of the Malayanisation Commission 1956, p. 95.
16. Ibid., pp. 95-6.
17. Ibid., pp. 218-23. The authors of the Minority Report tried to answer the charge that the Schemes of Service **had** been deliberately introduced in order to prevent local men from getting into the public services. The Schemes had been drawn up by a committee comprising C.C. Tan, Thio Chan Bee, Lin Yew Hock and P.F. de Souza, under the chairmanship of the Director of Education. The possession of an Honours degree was made the requirement for entry to Part II of all the Higher Services, whereas there was no such qualification for entry either to the British Civil Service or Her Majesty's Overseas Service.
18. R.E. Ince (for Deputy Secretary) to S.T.U. in S.T.U. File on Normal Training Issue.
19. Kan Siew Yee to Director of Education in S.T.U. File on Normal Training Issue.
20. McLellan to S.T.U. in S.T.U. File on Normal Training Issue.
21. Kan Siew Yee to Director of Education in S.T.U. File on Normal Training Issue.
22. R.E. Ince to S.T.U. in S.T.U. File on Normal Training Issue.
23. R.E. Ince to S.T.U. in S.T.U. File on Normal Training Issue.
24. Lee Siow Mong to S.T.U. in S.T.U. File on Normal Training Issue.
25. S.T.U. notice of Extraordinary General Meeting on 13.6.57.
26. S.T.U. Emergency Release to members, 8.6.57.
27. Singapore Government press statement, 11.6.57.
28. Ibid.
29. S.T.U. letter to members who were absent from meeting, held on 13.6.57.
30. Ibid.
31. G.T.A. minutes of Extraordinary General Meeting, held on 7.7.57.
32. Singapore Government press statement, 15.7.57.
33. S.T.U. press statement, 15.7.57.

34. Colony of Singapore, General Orders No. 207 and No. 208.
35. S.T.U. press statement, 15.7.57, in reply to the "infuriating" letter from the Minister of Education, 2.6.57.
36. Singapore Government press statement, 17.7.57.
37. S.T.U. **Emergency Release** to members, 13.6.57.
38. Lee Siow Mong to S.T.U., 3.8.57.
39. S.T.U. minutes of **Emergency Management Committee Meeting**, held on 22.3.58.
40. S.T.U. Special Release to members for July, 1958.

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CHAPTER 10

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1. Interim Report of the Malayanisation Commission 1956, p. 92.
 2. Ibid., p. 94.
 3. Ibid., p. 93.
 4. Ministry memorandum to G.T.A., 5.11.54.
 5. Ibid.
 6. Director of Education to G.T.A., 25.3.55.
 7. Director of Education to S.T.U. and G.T.A., 5.7.55.
McLellan invited 3 representatives each from the S.T.U. and the G.T.A. to a preliminary meeting to discuss the following proposals:
 - a. As new schools were being built, to appoint one headmaster for both the morning and afternoon sessions of each school;
 - b. To abolish the post of master of method;
 - c. To recruit a team of 20 Inspectors, "mainly from the ranks of principals and masters of method but including some graduates";
 - d. To increase the allowance of the principal of a double primary school to \$240 p.m. (i.e. the same allowance as for Senior Lecturer and Senior Specialist).
 - e. To have a scale of allowances for Inspectors (\$240, \$180 and \$120) the same as that for Teachers' Training College Lecturers and Secondary School Specialists.
 8. Colony of Singapore, White Paper on Education Policy 1956 (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1956), para. 45, p. 12.
 9. See Footnote No. 7.
 10. G.T.A. memorandum to Director of Education, 10.8.55.
 11. Ibid.
 12. See Footnote No. 7.
 13. G.T.A. memorandum to Director of Education, 10.8.55.

14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Minutes of meeting between Lee Siow Hong and teachers' representatives, held on 8.4.58.
17. G.T.A. to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, 25.3.55. The Director of Education or ~~the~~ Permanent Secretary, on each occasion when the subject of transfer of the C.E.S. officers cropped up, could not give the G.T.A. any **explanation** that it could find satisfaction in. An example was the reply to the G.T.A. on 3.6.55, in which the Permanent Secretary, R.M. Young, said:

Appointments, and therefore transfers, must be made in the best interests of the department as a whole; though the interests of the individual officer are often closely related to the interests of the department, they are not always identical and where they differ the former must give way to the latter. ...

For years the Federation of Malaya has had far more than its share of the expatriate staff, if worked out on the basis of approved establishments. ...

There is as yet no approved policy under which expatriate officers, as such, are debarred from consideration for administrative and other posts and in the absence of such a ruling, the Public Services Commission is expected to recommend the appointment of the most suitable officers available. All applications for such posts are forwarded, and if there have been cases in which you consider that the most suitable officers were not chosen, I fear that there is nothing to be done about it under the existing P.S.C. Ordinance. If it is your fear that the P.S.C. is just a rubber stamp for endorsing the views of Heads of Department, I can assure you that there is ample evidence that this is not true.
18. G.T.A. minutes of Extraordinary General Meeting, held on 16.4.55.
19. Acting Director of Education to G.T.A., 24.8.55.
20. G.T.A. minutes of Extraordinary General Meeting, held on 16.4.55.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. See Chapter 5, Footnote No. 58.
24. Ministry letter, 'Recognition of Specialist Qualifications in the Singapore Education Service' to S.T.U. and G.T.A., 24.2.55.
25. On 8.11.54, the G.T.A. submitted suggestions to the Ministry

regarding the "ritsonisation" of the allowances. Subsequently at a meeting with G.T.A. and S.T.U. representatives, the Permanent Secretary put forward scales of conversion, agreed to by both the Establishment Office and the Ministry, for the consideration of the S.T.U. and the G.T.A. From the G.T.A. Fourth Annual Report 1954-1955, presented to the Annual General Meeting on 27.6.55, the scales of conversion after "ritsonisation" were as follows:

	Allowances as in 1953 S.E.S.S.	Ritsonised by G.T.A.	Ritsonised by Government
Principal (5 Streams)	£420	£490	£520
Principal (4 Streams)	360	420	420
Inspector of Schools (Special Organiser)	300	350	320
Specialist, Grade I	240	280	320
Specialist, Grade II	180	210	220
Primary School Principal	150	175	175
Specialist, Grade III	120	140	140

The G.T.A. accepted the suggested scales offered by Government in a letter to the Ministry on 28.4.55.

26. Ibid.
27. Minutes of meeting between representatives of G.T.A. and S.T.U. and the Ministry, held on 9.2.55.
28. S.T.U. to Director of Education, 28.2.55.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. G.T.A. to Permanent Secretary, 10.9.55.
32. G.T.A. minutes of meeting of Honours degree holders, held on 11.11.55.
33. G.T.A. minutes of Fifth Annual General Meeting, held on 19.5.56.
34. Decisions of informal meeting between representatives of G.T.A., S.T.U. and M.A.S.C., held on 14.9.54.
35. Ministry notes of discussion between representatives of G.T.A., S.T.U. and M.A.S.C. and the Director of Education, held on 20.9.54.
36. Ibid.
37. S.T.U. minutes of Management Committee Meeting, held on 16.11.54.
38. S.T.U. to Director of Education, 17.11.54.

39. Director of Education to M.A.S.C., 22.11.54.
40. M.A.S.C. to Director of Education, 28.1.57.
41. Interin Report of the Malayanisation Commission 1956,
p. 101.
42. G.T.A. minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, held on
27.6.58.
43. Ibid.
44. G.T.A. to Permanent Secretary, 16.8.55.
45. Permanent Secretary to G.T.A., 24.8.55.
46. G.T.A. to Permanent Secretary, 10.8.55.
47. Permanent Secretary to G.T.A., 24.8.55.
48. Ibid.
49. G.T.A. to Minister of Education, 25.5.55.
50. Interin Report of the Malayanisation Commission 1956,
p. 96.
51. Director of Education to G.T.A., 5.11.54.
52. S.T.U. Special Release to members, July, 1958.
53. Editorial, Teachers' Forum, November, 1957.
54. G.T.A. minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, held on
5.4.57.

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CHAPTER 11

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1. See Chapter 9, pp. 231-2.
 2. Cited from the memorandum circulated by the Staff Side on 7.5.56 in G.T.A. memorandum to Director of Education, May, 1958.
 3. Minutes of meeting between teachers' representatives and Permanent Secretary and Establishment Officer, 8.4.58.
 4. Joint Memorandum of S.T.U., G.T.A. and Singapore Malay Teachers' Union, 3.4.58.
 5. Ibid.
 6. Editorial, Teachers' Forum, March, 1958.
 7. See Joint Memorandum, published in Bulletin No. 7, G.T.A., May, 1958. The salary scales which the teachers' representatives proposed were as follows:

<u>Teachers in Training</u>	
a. Malay School	: \$130x10-150 p.m.
b. Normal training course:	\$175 p.m.
c. Certificate course	: \$100 p.m.
<u>Trained Teachers</u>	
a. Malay School trained	: \$250x15-280/Bar/295x15-385/Bar/ 425x20-505x50-555x30-615 p.m. (18 years)
b. Normal trained	: \$310x15-340/Bar/355x15-385x40- 425x20-505/Bar/555x30-735 p.m. (18 years)
c. Certificated	: \$340x15-370/Bar/385x40-425x20- 505/Bar/555x30-735/Bar/785x35- 820 p.m. (18 years)
d. Pass Degree	: \$465x20-505/Bar/555x30-735/Bar/ 785x35-1030 p.m. (18 years)
f. Honours Degree	: \$615x30-675/Bar/705x30-735x50- 785x35-1030/Bar/1100x40-1260 p.m. (18 years)
 8. Editorial, Teachers' Forum, March, 1958.
 9. Minutes of meeting between teachers' representatives and Permanent Secretary and Establishment Officer, 8.4.58.
 10. G.T.A. minutes of Seventh Annual General Meeting, held on 25.5.58.

11. The new S.T.U. Management Committee was led by S. Sivanandan as president and Wee Chwee Hock as general secretary.
12. S.T.U. Special Release to members, October, 1958.
13. Ibid.
14. Editorial, Teachers' Forum, October, 1958.
15. See G.T.A. memorandum on the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme, May, 1958.
16. Editorial, Teachers' Forum, August, 1958.
17. The scale, after "ritsonisation", for the Normal trained teachers was as follows:
 - Men: \$325x15-490/Bar/530x20-690 p.n. (1 Bar)
 - Women: 295x12-415x15-445/Bar/460x15-565 p.n. (1 Bar)
 The scale for the non-graduate teachers in the 1958 S.E.S. Scheme was as follows:
 - Men: \$225x15-255/Bar/295x15-385/Bar/425x20-505/Bar/555x25-655 p.n. (3 Bars)
 - Women: 190x15-220/Bar/240x15-330/Bar/355x15-415/Bar/445x20-525 p.n. (3 Bars)
18. Ibid.
19. Vanniasingham Report 1959, p. 16.
20. Ibid.
21. See Footnote No. 17.
22. See Footnote No. 17.
23. The Certificated teachers were not unhappy with their salary scale before the proposed New Pay Scheme. Admission to the Certificate course was restricted to holders of Grade I Certificates although some Grade II candidates were accepted.
24. S.T.U. memorandum to Director of Education, n.d.
25. Ibid.
26. S.T.U. Memorandum on Pass Degree Graduate Teachers, 17.4.62.
27. Ibid.
28. State of Singapore, Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Education (Singapore: Government Printing Office, 1963), pp. 70-1.
29. Findings of the Education Advisory Board's Science Staffing Sub-Committee 1961 (2nd Report), cited in full in S.T.U. Memorandum on Pass Degree Graduate Teachers.

30. Ibid.
31. S.T.U. Memorandum by Head Teachers' Branch, 2.3.63, p.4.
32. S.T.U. Memorandum to the Civil Service Salaries Commission, appointed on 19.4.66.
33. S.T.U. Memorandum by Head Teachers' Branch, p. 3.

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CHAPTER 12

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1. See Chapter 7, p. 193.
 2. Colony of Singapore, Colonial Regulations.
 3. S.T.U. Memorandum on the Interim Report of the Malayisation Commission, 25.10.55, p. 5. The Normal Training Issue was finally resolved in September, 1962 when the Minister of Education made concrete proposals in order to rectify the anomalies of the Normal trained teachers' salary scale vis-a-vis the Certificated teachers' salary scale of \$365-780. All Normal trained teachers who satisfied one of the conditions, as listed below, would be placed on the Certificated teachers' scale.
 - Conditions: a. If they possessed 2 Principal Passes at the Higher School Certificate level; or
 - b. If they had 5 years of **teaching experience** in a secondary school; or
 - c. If they were 35 years of age or over on 1.1.63.
 4. S.T.U. Memorandum calling for the Rectification of Anomalies in the Conditions of Service of Serving Normal Trained Teachers recruited under the 1955 S.E.S. Scheme, 13.3.62.
 5. Ibid.
 6. The 2 revisions were effected by:
 1. Civil Service Salaries Commission of Singapore 1967, under the chairmanship of G.E. Harvey.
 2. Salary negotiations between teachers' representatives and the Ministry of Education in May, 1971.
 7. The Tasks Ahead Part II (Singapore: People's Action Party, 1959), p. 4.
 8. G.T.A. minutes of Fourth Annual General Meeting, held on 27.6.55.
 9. 'New Horizons in Education', Teachers' Forum, May, 1959.
'Teachers in a Changing Singapore', Teachers' Forum, June, 1959.
'Changes in a Socialist Society', Teachers' Forum, June, 1959.
'The Role of Teachers in a Democracy', Teachers' Forum, August, 1959.
'The S.T.U. - A New Approach', Teachers' Forum, August, 1959.
 10. S. Sivanandan, 'Teachers' Role', Teachers' Forum, April, 1959.

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meetings and extraordinary general meetings;
M.T.U. annual general meetings, executive committee
meetings (1947 - 1949) and Conference of Delegates
of Teachers' Unions (1949 - 1951).
- Notes on: meetings with Advisory Council members and later with
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meetings with officials of the Departments of
Education and later with officials of the Ministry
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Back Pay/S.G.S.B.P.C. (1946 - 1947)
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Tenure Problems

Department of Education, Malayan Union/Federation of Malaya
Department of Education/Ministry of Education, Singapore
S.T.U. Branches (Normal Trained Teachers' Branch, Graduate Teachers' Branch, Certificated Teachers' Branch, Head Teachers' Branch and Miscellaneous Branch)

G.T.A. Files on: annual general meetings and executive committee meetings (1951 - 1959)
Department of Education/Ministry of Education, Singapore (1951 - 1959)
Bulletin, organ of G.T.A.
(The G.T.A. was dissolved in February, 1960 and its members applied individually for membership in S.T.U. All G.T.A. records became the property of S.T.U. since its dissolution).

Publications: . The Singapore Teacher (1946 - 1947)
The S.T.U. Bulletin (1946 - 1947)
/ Teachers' Forum (1947 - 1953)
Annual Reports (1947 - 1959)
* Malayan Educator (1947 -)
(The Malayan Educator is the organ of the teachers in English schools in the Malay Peninsula. It has existed since October, 1947. It is now published by the National Union of Teachers, Malaysia; the National Union of Teachers in the Malay Peninsula came into being in 1954 when all the teachers' unions (P.T.U., U.S.T., J.T.U., etc.) decided on taking steps to dissolve their State unions and the M.T.U. in order to form an amalgamated union, the National Union of Teachers, Federation of Malaya, as it was then called).

Memoranda: . Memorandum of the Singapore Teachers' Union to the Carr-Saunders Commission on University Education in Malaya. (mimeographed, 1947)
/ A memorandum on the Unification of the Education Service and Revision of Salaries by the Singapore Teachers' Union, an organisation of teachers employed in Government and Grant-in-aid English Schools in the Colony of Singapore. (mimeographed, April, 1947)
* Memorandum on the Trusted Commission's Recommendations for Teachers. (mimeographed, March, 1948)

Memorandum on Salaries and Conversion for the consideration of the Salaries Commission Officer, A.V. Cowgill, C.M.G., M.C. (mimeographed, 16.9.48)

Special Plea for Aided School Teachers to be paid housing allowance immediately on the same basis as temporary and pensionable Government School Teachers. (mimeographed, 12.9.49)

Memorandum on Teachers' Salaries for the consideration of the Benham Committee. (mimeographed, 12.9.49)

Memorandum pressing for the Rejection of the Benham Committee's recommendations for Teachers and Chapter 7, Education Service, in the Report of the Select Committee on the Recruitment White Paper No. 69 and for the immediate acceptance of the principle of a Unified Education Service. (mimeographed, February, 1950)

Petition from the Teachers of Government and Government Aided Schools in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore dealing with the conditions of service of government and government aided school teachers. (mimeographed, 7.10.50)

Memorandum on the conditions of service of Instructors employed in the junior technical (trade) schools with proposals for including them in the unified education service. (mimeographed, May, 1950)

Unification of the Education Service Part II. A memorandum setting out the principles, qualifications and proposals for a complete salary structure for the posts of assistant teachers, Head teachers, supervisors and administrators in the education service which regulates government, government aided English and regional schools. (mimeographed August, 1950)

A memorandum setting out the objections of the Singapore Teachers' Union to the recommendations of the Select Committee (Report No.103 of 1950) pertaining to the education service. (mimeographed, 29.12.50)

Memorandum of the Trade Unions of Singapore on the high cost of living with recommendations for an adequate revision in the cost of living, Singapore and housing allowances. (mimeographed, December, 1950)

Memorandum on housing allowance for government aided English school teachers for the consideration of the Joint Committee appointed under the chairmanship of Dr. F.C. Benham to consider the cost of living allowance in the Federation of Malaya and Singapore. (mimeographed, 10.4.51)

Draft memorandum on the establishment of a unified education service in the Federation of Malaya similar to that recommended to the Government of Singapore for the Colony of Singapore, Parts I and II. (mimeographed, 22.6.51)

Memorandum on the introduction and restriction of non-pensionable allowances to married expatriate officers. (type-written, 22.8.52)

Memorandum on the Joy Report. (type-written, 15.3.55)

Petition to the Director of Education from teachers in government and government aided schools, asking for the acceptance of Normal training as the basic qualification for direct entry to the Singapore Education Service, the abolition of post normal training and the institution of a single type of basic training for teachers. (mimeographed, 19.2.55)

Memorandum of the Singapore Teachers' Union to the Malayanisation Commission. (type-written, 26.10.55)

Memorandum of the Singapore Teachers' Union on the Interim Report of the Malayanisation Commission. (type-written, 25.10.55)

A case for pre-war recruited aided English school teachers and clerks to increase their retirement benefits to the level of those of their post-war colleagues. (mimeographed, 20.3.57)

Memorandum calling for the rectification of anomalies in the conditions of service of serving Normal trained teachers recruited under the 1953 Singapore

Education Service Scheme.
(type-written, March, 1962)

Memorandum on pass degree graduate
teachers. (mimeographed, 17.4.62)

Memorandum on salaries of head teachers
and/or principals employed in the
Singapore Education Service.
(mimeographed, 2.3.63)

S.T.U. Memorandum to the Civil Service
Salaries Commission, appointed on 19.4.66.
(August, 1966)

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No. 175A, 7.9.28
No. 1583, 19.8.32

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Council, Colony of Singapore, 3rd session
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1952)

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system of Part-time Teacher Training in the
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language media to replace the present two
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